

# CHILLING

TALES OF HORROR

OCT.

50¢

PDC

**THE  
DEMON  
MASTER**

**KING of the  
VAMPIRES**

**HOWL  
OF THE  
HUNTER**

**THE DEVIL  
ON YOUR  
TV DIAL**





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the  
man  
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# CHILLING

## TALES OF HORROR

OCTOBER 1970

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 6



### THE DEVIL ON YOUR TV DIAL.....

Hate and jealousy can do strange things, especially when they involve the spirits of the other world

4

### KING OF THE VAMPIRES.....

He held a whole town in slavery without hope of rescue or salvation

10

### HOWL OF THE HUNTER.....

Three short days in which a soul that had belonged to evil could find either redemption or hell

18

### CAPTAIN CROSSBONES.....

Lover, killer, demon, his ship was the only thing that could save a civilization

27

### DEATH IS A STAR SAPPHIRE.....

The fire in the heart of the cursed gem lured every man who touched it to perdition

36

### THE DEMON MASTER.....

His horde of the devil's spawn brought couple after couple to the yawning gates of damnation

44

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EVERYONE WAS HAPPY WHEN JOE GEER WAS MADE TECHNICAL DIRECTOR OF THE LOCAL TV STATION -- EVERYONE BUT **ROD RANDALL!**

WE'VE DECIDED YOU'RE THE BEST MAN FOR THE JOB, JOE!

THANKS, MR. SAUNDERS!

I'M AS GOOD A RADIO ENGINEER AS HE IS! I SHOULD HAVE GOTTEN THE JOB!



AT THE RECEPTION FOR JOE--

MIGHT AS WELL ADMIT IT-- I **ENVY** YOU!

YOU SHOULDN'T, ROD-- THIS IS JUST A STEP UPWARD! TAKE SAUNDERS, THE GENERAL MANAGER-- I **ENVY HIM**-- AND I'M OUT TO GET HIS JOB NEXT!



ROD-- EVERYBODY BROUGHT A GIFT BUT US!

ER-- JOE, I'VE GOT A PRESENT FOR YOU, BUT IT HASN'T BEEN DELIVERED YET!





ROD AND ENID LEFT THE PARTY EARLY, AS ROD'S BITTERNESS GREW--

HE SHOULD BE BUYING ME A PRESENT! GUESS I'LL HAVE TO MAKE GOOD ON IT, THOUGH---

ROD--  
LOOK!

IT'S JUST THE THING! JOE CAN USE IT IN THAT HUNTING LODGE OF HIS!

STRANGE-- I DON'T REMEMBER THIS STORE BEING HERE WHEN I PASSED BY THIS MORNING!

YOU'VE MADE A WISE CHOICE! I'M SURE YOU'LL FIND THIS AN **UNUSUAL BARGAIN!**

THAT SALESMAN-- HE'S **UNEARTHLY-LOOKING!**



AT ROD'S HOME--

SOMETHING ABOUT IT MAKES ME FEEL-- **UNEASY, ROD!**

**NONSENSE!** I WANT TO TEST IT... I'LL GET MY TOOLS!



A MOMENT LATER--

**ROD, COME QUICKLY!** THE SET-- IT WORKS, BUT IT'S IN **COLOR!**

**COLOR? BOY, I DID GET A BARGAIN!**



THERE WAS A MYSTERY PROGRAM ON THE SCREEN-- BUT THAT WASN'T WHAT MADE ROD'S HEART SUDDENLY POUND WITH CREEPING TERROR--

GOOD EVENING! THIS IS **MORDO**, SPEAKING TO YOU FROM THE **SPIRIT WORLD!**

**HOLY SMOKE--** I DON'T GET IT. **LOOK!**



IT'S PLAYING WITHOUT ELECTRICITY-- AND THAT'S **IMPOSSIBLE!**





I, MORDO, AM REGISTRAR OF THE SPIRIT WORLD! IT SEEMS THAT IN ORDER TO GET NEW SPIRITS FOR OUR REALM, WE MUST KEEP UP WITH THE TIMES-- THUS, WE NEED RECRUITS WITH **TELEVISION EXPERIENCE!** THAT'S WHY WE HAVE CONTACTED ROD RANDALL!



ROD-- WH-WHAT IS IT? I'M **SCARED!**

I-- I'M AT A LOSS, TOO! MAYBE IT'S SOME KIND OF JOKE--



BUT THE DIABOLICAL FACE ON THE SCREEN LEERED HYPNOTICALLY, AND--

IT'S NO JOKE! WE NEED YOUR GENIUS-- AND WE NEED IT **NOW!**



AS THEY STARED, HELPLESSLY, A VAST, DARK WHIRLPOOL SEEMED TO ENGULF THEM--

ROD-- WHERE ARE YOU? **HELP!**



I CAN'T SEE YOU, DARLING! SOMETHING'S -- **HAPPENING!**

SUDDENLY, A STRANGE, EERIE GLARE-- THE SHUDDERING REALITY OF **TERROR!**

WE'RE IN A-- TV STUDIO! BUT IT'S-- **FANTASTIC!**

YES-- THE STUDIO OF THE SPIRIT WORLD-- AND YOU WILL BE IN CHARGE OF IT!



WHOEVER YOU ARE, I **REFUSE** THE JOB! YOU BROUGHT US HERE-- NOW SEND US BACK AND GET YOURSELF ANOTHER BOY!



IT IS **TOO LATE!** HAVING PASSED THE MYSTIC PORTALS THAT SEPARATE THE PHYSICAL WORLD FROM THE SPIRITUAL WORLD, YOU MUST REMAIN HERE-- **FOREVER!**

OH, ROD-- **NO!**





YOU CAN OFFER ME THE JOB AGAIN--  
AFTER I'M DEAD! RIGHT NOW, I'M  
GETTING OUT OF HERE!

THE WILL TO LIVE SENT EXTRA STRENGTH TO DON'S  
FLAILING ARMS-- AND WITH A SURGE OF  
CRUSHING POWER--

WE MADE IT TO THE  
DOOR! GET OUTSIDE  
-- FAST!



BEFORE THEM, A BLEAK, HORRIFYING  
REGION OF DARKNESS AND WEIRD  
SHAPES--THE **SPIRIT WORLD**.

WE'LL HIDE OUT TILL THOSE  
CREEPS LEAVE THE "STUDIO"!  
MAYBE WITH MY RADIO  
KNOWLEDGE, WE CAN GET  
BACK THE WAY  
WE **CAME!**

WHEN MORDO AND HIS GRUE-  
SOME HORDE DEPARTED,  
LEAVING A LONE GUARD,  
ROD MADE HIS DESPERATE  
BID FOR FREEDOM--

WHAT HAVE WE  
GAINED? WE'RE  
TRAPPED-- IN  
A LAND  
BEYOND  
IMAGINATION!

IT'S NIGHTMARISH,  
ALL RIGHT! BUT  
I'VE GOT AN  
**IDEA!**

THERE'S ONE THING THAT  
SEEMS TO WORK WITH  
YOU GOONS-- **SURPRISE!**



LET'S SEE  
NOW-- THESE  
CONTROLS  
DON'T LOOK SO  
COMPLICATED---

ROD--THEY'RE  
COMING! THEY'VE  
GOT US!

I PREPARED THIS AMBUSH, KNOWING YOU  
WOULD RETURN! NOW YOUR EXISTENCE HERE  
WILL BE **FAR LESS PLEASANT!**







NOW-- ARE YOU READY TO BEGIN YOUR **NEW DUTIES**?

HMM-- IF MY STRENGTH WON'T GET US OUT OF HERE, MAYBE MY **WITS** WILL!



LOOK, MORDO-- WHY CAN'T YOU USE **SOMEONE ELSE** ON THIS PROJECT-- SOMEONE LIKE **JOE GEER**? HE'S GOT MORE EXPERIENCE, AND WOULD DO A FAR BETTER JOB!



IT WON'T WORK... THE ONLY RECRUITS WE CAN GET IN THIS WAY ARE THOSE WHO HAVE DISPLAYED SIGNS OF **MORAL WEAKNESS**! YOU QUALIFIED BECAUSE OF YOUR VICIOUS **ENVY** OF JOE GEER!

NOW ROD SAW HIS CHANCE TO ESCAPE-- AND GET EVEN WITH JOE AS WELL--

BUT **JOE'S** ENVY IS EVEN **GREATER**! HE TOLD ME, HIMSELF, HOW HE'S OUT TO GET THE GENERAL MANAGER'S JOB! HE'S PROBABLY WATCHING TV RIGHT NOW... BY JAMMING HIS SET, I CAN CONTACT HIM, BRING HIM HERE!



WELL, MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT... I'LL DO IT!



WHY, HE'S TALKING TO-- **ME**! WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT, ROD?

I'VE GOT A **SURPRISE** FOR YOU, JOE! YOU'VE LORDED IT OVER ME LONG ENOUGH! NOW IT'S **MY** TURN!

YOU'VE CONTACTED HIM, EH? NOW **YOU** MAY HAVE THE HONOR OF TRANSPORTING HIM TO THE SPIRIT WORLD!



HIS-- HIS WIFE'S WITH HIM---

HEY! WHAT'S **ROD** DOING ON THIS PROGRAM WE'RE WATCHING?

AN INSTANT LATER--

WHA---! HOW DID WE GET **HERE**?



NEVER MIND THAT... YOU'D BETTER START WORRYING ABOUT HOW TO GET **BACK**!



FEARFUL OF TREACHERY, ROD TURNED TO MORDO--

NOW-- KEEP  
YOUR PROMISE,  
AND SEND US  
BACK TO OUR  
OWN WORLD!

I'M TEMPTED TO KEEP YOU  
**BOTH** HERE, BUT I'LL SHOW  
YOU THAT **OUR** CODE IS  
MORE HONORABLE  
THAN **YOURS!**



YOU HAVE  
DECIDED  
YOUR FATE--  
**BACK  
YOU  
GO!**

ROD-- I'M  
GETTING--  
DIZZY---



AGAIN THE FATHOMLESS WHIRLPOOL, THE SWIRLING  
DARKNESS-- AND THEN--

DARLING-- **WE MADE IT!**  
WE'RE BACK IN MY  
APARTMENT!

I-- I'M GLAD...  
BUT I FEEL SO  
SORRY FOR JOE  
AND HIS WIFE---



I TALKED MY WAY OUT OF  
IT-- LET JOE DO THE SAME,  
IF HE CAN! NOW I'LL  
TURN OFF THE SET---

ROD-- I FEEL  
KIND OF--  
**STRANGE!**



THEN, AS ENID TURNED, SHE SCREAMED-- A  
KNIFELIKE SCREAM THAT BESPOKE THE  
FARTHEST REACHES OF HUMAN TERROR!

ROD--  
**L-LOOK!**



IN FRONT OF THE TV SET, TWO BODIES, COLD IN  
DEATH-- THEIR SIGHTLESS EYES FIXED ON THE  
BLANK SCREEN!

WE GOT BACK, ALL RIGHT--  
AS **BODILESS SPIRITS!**  
NOW WE'RE LOST BETWEEN  
TWO WORLDS-- **FOR ALL  
ETERNITY!**



--AND FOR ALL ETERNITY,  
THEY ENVIED JOE GEER!

THE  
END



# KING *of the* VAMPIRES

DOWN THROUGH THE AGES HAS COME THE LEGEND OF THE FATEFUL **VAMPIRE**-- WEIRD-- UNEARTHLY-- STRIKING OUT OF THE MIDNIGHT GLOOM FOR ITS HAPLESS HUMAN PREY! HERE'S THE SPINE-TINGLING STORY OF AN EERIE BEING FROM OUT OF THE DEPTHS OF THE **UNKNOWN** ITSELF -- A SUPERNATURAL SPECTER THAT WILL LIVE FOREVER IN YOUR MEMORY AS **KING OF THE VAMPIRES!**



IT WAS A LONELY COUNTRY HOUSE THAT TOM WRIGHT AND HIS WIFE SUSAN HAD RENTED--

YOU HAVE A REAL BARGAIN HERE, SIR!

I KNOW, MR. LEROY-- YOU'VE LET US HAVE IT CHEAPLY! BUT THERE HAVE BEEN ODD WHISPERS-- ABOUT THE DISAPPEARANCE OF FORMER TENANTS--



**RUMORS**, MY DEAR SIR-- SPREAD BY THE IGNORANT PEASANTS HEREABOUT! I'D ADVISE YOU TO **FORGET** THEM!



THAT COLD, DANK PRESENCE-- I'M **AFRAID** OF THAT MAN!

OH, A BAT!



THERE'S NOTHING TO FEAR IN **THEM**, MRS. WRIGHT! IN FACT-- I FIND THEM QUITE **ATTRACTIVE!**

MAYBE **YOU** DO, MR. LEROY-- BUT THEY GIVE **ME** THE **CREEPS!**



**SUDDENLY--** A STRANGELY-PALE AND RIGID GIRL ENTERS--

OH, BY THE WAY, THIS IS **JANE**-- THE MAID YOU ASKED ME TO HIRE!

THANKS, LEROY! I'M SURE SHE'LL BE QUITE COMPETENT!







NEXT DAY--

I WISH I COULD GET THAT STRANGE FEAR OF LEROY OUT OF MY MIND-- HE WAS EVEN NICE ENOUGH TO STOCK THIS PLACE WITH HIS OWN BOOKS! SAY-- WHAT'S **THIS**?

THE MUSTY PAGES DISCLOSE--

KELLTOWN, OHIO-- THAT'S **HERE!** KING OF THE VAMPIRES-- LE ROI-- LE ROI-- **LEROY!** GOOD HEAVENS!

THE DEADLIEST SPIRIT IN ALL AMERICAN FOLKLORE IS AN ANCIENT FRENCH SPECTER WHO SETTLED HERE OVER A CENTURY AGO, NEAR WHAT IS NOW KELLTOWN, OHIO. HE WAS KNOWN AS **KING OF THE VAMPIRES--** OR, IN THE FRENCH, **LE ROI DES VAMPIRES.**



TOM WOULD YOU THINK I WERE CRAZY IF I SUSPECTED MR. LEROY OF BEING -- **A VAMPIRE?**

I WOULDN'T THINK-- I'D **KNOW!** HERE COMES JANE-- DON'T LET **HER** HEAR YOU TALKING SUCH NONSENSE!

IT'S **NOT** NONSENSE-- I'VE GOT REASONS FOR IT IN BLACK AND WHITE! AND IF IT'S TRUE-- IT WOULD ACCOUNT FOR THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE TENANTS WHO LIVED HERE BEFORE US!

HA-- I CAN'T WAIT TO TELL **LEROY** THIS! HE'LL GET A LAUGH OUT OF IT-- I'LL DROP IN ON HIM THIS AFTERNOON!

NO-- **NOT THAT!**



WHY NOT, JANE? SAY-- **WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?**

IF YOU GO TO HIM-- YOU-- YOU-- **ARGH!**



LEROY-- THE HERD-- DON'T-- JOIN IT--

QUICK, TOM-- SHE'S FAINTED!



**L-LOOK!** SHE'S DEAD! AND THOSE PUNCTURE MARKS ON HER THROAT-- **IT'S THE MARK OF THE VAMPIRE!**

PLEASE, NO MORE OF THAT TOMFOOLERY AT A TIME LIKE **THIS!** LEROY'S GOT A PHONE-- I'D BETTER USE IT TO NOTIFY THE AUTHORITIES!





NO, PLEASE--  
NOT **LEROY!**  
NOT AFTER  
ALL **THIS!**

GET A GRIP ON  
YOURSELF, SUE!  
HE'S JUST A HARM-  
LESS GUY-- AND  
JANE'S HAD A HEART  
ATTACK, THAT'S ALL!  
NOW-- **I'M GOING!**



HE-- HE WOULDN'T LISTEN!  
IF ONLY I COULD **PROTECT**  
HIM-- MAYBE THIS BOOK  
ON **VAMPIRES**  
CAN GIVE  
ME SOME  
HINTS!



BUT IN-  
STEAD-- NOTHING-- EXCEPT A  
MARGINAL NOTE  
SCRIBBLED BY SOMEONE  
WHO MUST HAVE LIVED HERE  
BEFORE US! AND IT SAYS,  
"**LEROY MUST BE BEHIND THE  
DISAPPEARANCE OF JANE,  
THE MAID!**"

MEANWHILE -- AT THE STRANGELY MENACING  
HOUSE INHABITED BY LEROY --



CAN I-- USE YOUR  
PHONE, MR. LEROY?  
SOMETHING SHOCKING'S  
HAPPENED-- **JANE'S  
DEAD!**

WHY, THAT'S  
TERRIBLE--  
**TERRIBLE!**  
ER-- HOW DID  
IT HAPPEN?



-- AND THEN SHE JUST  
KEELED OVER! FUNNY  
THING, THOUGH-- JUST  
BEFORE SHE DIED, SHE  
TRIED TO SAY SOME-  
THING ABOUT YOU --  
AND YOUR **HERD!**  
WHAT COULD SHE  
HAVE MEANT?

AH-- NOTHING FOR YOU TO  
WORRY ABOUT! SHE WAS  
PROBABLY **DELIRIOUS**,  
THAT'S ALL!



SUDDENLY - AMAZINGLY--  
**WHAT THE-- IT CAN'T  
BE! THAT'S JANE  
NOW-- BUT SHE'S  
DEAD!**

PLEASE-- DON'T  
EXCITE YOUR-  
SELF! IT'S  
MERELY  
HER SISTER,  
WHO WORKS  
FOR ME!



UH-UH-- I'M NOT BUYING  
**THAT!** I KNOW JANE  
WHEN I SEE HER, AND  
THERE'S SOMETHING  
**PHONY** ABOUT ALL  
THIS! WHERE'S YOUR  
PHONE?-- I'M CALLING  
THE **POLICE!**



AN IMPETUOUS YOUNG MAN--  
AND **RASH!** I CAN SEE THAT  
THERE'S NO USE HIDING THE  
**TRUTH** FROM YOU ANY LONGER!  
YES, THAT **WAS** JANE --  
WALKING --  
YET  
**DEAD!**



SHOCKED, AREN'T YOU?--  
SO SHOCKED THAT YOU  
HARDLY KNOW WHERE  
I'M LEADING YOU! I  
THOUGHT YOU'D LIKE  
TO SEE THE **HERD**  
JANE TRIED TO  
WARN YOU ABOUT--  
**MY HERD!**

MAYBE I SHOULD  
HAVE LISTENED TO  
MY WIFE'S SUS-  
PICIONS ABOUT YOU,  
LEROY! BUT I DON'T  
SCARE EASY, SO  
GO AHEAD--  
**SHOW ME!**

**LOOK FOR YOURSELF,  
FOOL! MY HERD--  
BEAUTIFUL,  
ISN'T IT?**

**H-HOLY  
SMOKE!  
YOU--  
MONSTER!**



**STALLS-- AND WITHIN THEM-- CREATURES THAT WERE ONCE HUMAN! DREAD CREATURES THAT  
NO LONGER LIVED -- BOUND BY SILVER CHAINS TO THE WILL OF A **DEMON FROM BEYOND!****

**THESE** ARE MY PETS, WRIGHT! YOU CAN SEE **NOW**  
WHAT HAPPENED TO MY FORMER TENANTS -- AND  
WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO **YOU!**

THEY WERE ONCE PEOPLE,  
LIVING PEOPLE! WHAT--  
HAVE YOU DONE  
TO THEM?



NOTHING-- EXCEPT MAKE  
THEM **VAMPIRES**--LIKE  
**ME!** EACH NIGHT I SEND  
THEM ABROAD FOR PREY--  
AND, LIKE DUTIFUL SLAVES--  
THEY BRING IT BACK  
TO ME!

YOU-- **DEVIL!**  
BUT YOU'LL  
NEVER GET  
**ME-- OR  
SUSAN!**

**THINK NOT?  
YOU'RE  
JOINING  
MY HERD--  
RIGHT  
NOW!**

**OH!!**





IT WAS EASY! HE'LL  
FEEL MY FANGS NOW--  
THE FIRST STEP IN  
MAKING HIM ONE  
OF US!



THE FOUL DEED IS DONE--  
AND MOMENTS LATER--

I--  
FEEL  
STRANGE  
-- MY  
THROAT--

AH, BUT SOON  
YOU'LL BE  
IMMORTAL--  
AND FEAST  
BENEATH THE  
MIDNIGHT  
MOON!



BUT YOU'RE NOT  
READY TO CHANGE  
INTO A VAMPIRE  
YET! MEANWHILE,  
YOU'LL KNOW THE  
SERVITUDE OF  
THE SILVER  
CHAIN!

YOU ARE--  
KING OF THE  
VAMPIRES--  
AND I AM--  
YOUR  
SUBJECT!



THEN-- A STRANGE  
TRANSFORMATION--

COME, MY HERD! WE SHALL  
FLY OVER THE COUNTRYSIDE IN  
SEARCH OF VICTIMS! AND  
REMEMBER-- WHAT YOU  
CAPTURE IS  
MINE!



IS THERE NONE THAT  
CAN HELP ME--AND  
RELEASE ME FROM  
THIS  
LIVING  
DEATH?



I CAN-- DO NOTHING!  
HE HAS ME-- IN  
HIS POWER, TOO!



MEANWHILE--  
OUTSIDE--

THOSE HORRIBLE BATS!  
--I WONDER WHERE  
TOM CAN BE?



AFTER A FRANTIC SEARCH--

OH, TOM, I WAS SO  
WORRIED-- BUT YOU'RE  
SAFE! I-- THOSE  
CHAINS! WHAT--



YES, I'M  
SAFE--  
SAFE!





AS SUSAN DRAWS CLOSE-- THE VISION  
OF HIS MASTER!

YOU CAN BE ONE OF US NOW! YOU HAVE  
BUT TO LUNGE, LET YOUR FANGS STRIKE  
DEEP-- AND IMMORTALITY  
IS YOURS!

I'VE GOT TO--  
RELEASE YOU!



SO-- GRIPPED BY A STRANGE, DREAD INSANITY--

NO, TOM-- NO! YOU'RE OUT  
OF YOUR SENSES! IT'S ME--  
SUSAN-- YOUR  
WIFE!

ARGH!



DIMLY, THE THOUGHT PENETRATES-- AND AT  
THE LAST MOMENT, LOVE CONQUERS THE  
LURE OF THE VAMPIRE! WITH  
NORMALCY RESTORED--

THANK HEAVENS,  
DARLING! I  
THOUGHT YOU'D  
LOST YOUR  
MIND!

I ALMOST DID, SUE--  
BUT YOU BROUGHT  
ME BACK!



NOW TO BREAK THESE CHAINS--  
THEY'RE SILVER-- NOT TOO  
STRONG-- BUT I GUESS I'M  
TOO WEAKENED! THAT  
WOODEN STAKE YOU'RE  
HOLDING--  
MAYBE  
THAT'LL  
DO IT!

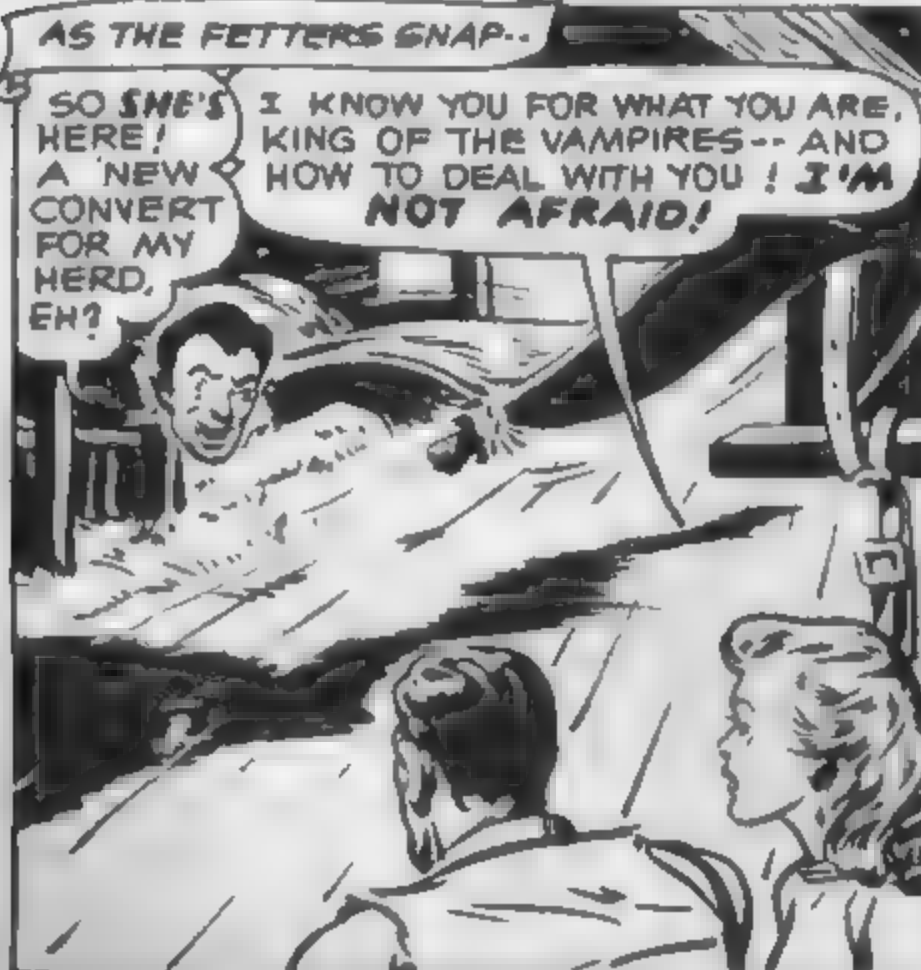
I'LL HAVE TO TRY  
FAST! THAT  
GIANT BAT  
HEADING THIS  
WAY-- IT'S  
LEROY!



AS THE FETTERS SNAP--

SO SHE'S  
HERE!  
A NEW  
CONVERT  
FOR MY  
HERD,  
EH?

I KNOW YOU FOR WHAT YOU ARE,  
KING OF THE VAMPIRES-- AND  
HOW TO DEAL WITH YOU! I'M  
NOT AFRAID!



SO YOU WISH TO PIT YOUR PUNY HUMAN  
STRENGTH AGAINST MINE! HA-HA!  
FIRST I'LL ATTEND TO MY  
PETS, AND THEN--  
WE'LL SEE!







INTO YOUR STALLS, CATTLE! YOU'LL NEED YOUR REST-- FOR AT NIGHTFALL TOMORROW, WE SHALL WING FORTH AGAIN!

NOW'S OUR CHANCE, SUE-- RUN!

NO-- WHILE HE LIVES, HE'LL ALWAYS BE A MENACE TO US! BUT TOGETHER-- MAYBE WE CAN DEFEAT HIM!

MY EARS ARE SHARP, LITTLE ONE-- I HEARD WHAT YOU SAID! YOU-- DEFEAT ME! WITH WHAT? NO WEAPON CAN AFFECT ME! WITH SUBJECTS LIKE YOU TO SERVE ME-- I SHALL LIVE FOREVER!



YOU MAY BE KING OF THE VAMPIRES-- BUT YOU'VE NO CONTROL OVER ME!

NOT PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THE FEEL OF MY FANGS-- NOW-- AND YOU'LL BE MY SLAVE!

QUICKLY SUSAN REACHES INTO HER POCKETBOOK, AND--

--WITHDRAWS A WEAPON THAT NO VAMPIRE CAN WITHSTAND--!



SEE YOURSELF FOR WHAT YOU ARE, DEMON-- AND CRINGE! I'VE BEEN READING UP ON VAMPIRES SINCE I FIRST SUSPECTED YOU-- AND LEARNED OF THE TERROR A MIRROR CAN STRIKE INTO YOUR KIND!

NO-- NO! I MUST NEVER SEE MY REFLECTION! TAKE IT-AWAY!



THEN-- JANE READIES THE SECOND PART OF HER PLAN--

QUICK, TOM-- WHILE HE'S STILL STAGGERED! DRIVE THIS OAK STAKE THROUGH THE MONSTER'S HEART-- OR YOU'LL REMAIN FOREVER UNDER HIS INFLUENCE!

I-- CAN'T! IT'S COMING BACK NOW-- THE AWFUL HYPNOTIC INFLUENCE WHICH HIS FANGS HAVE WROUGHT OVER ME!

AH, YOU SEE-- HE'S STILL UNDER MY CONTROL, AND ALWAYS WILL BE! MIGHT AS WELL PUT THAT MIRROR AWAY-- YOU'VE LOST, MY DEAR!

NO! IT WILL HOLD YOU OFF-- WHILE I GO ON FIGHTING TO THE END, VAMPIRE!





THEN IT BEGAN-- THE STRANGE AND EERIE  
CONTEST FOR A SOUL--

GOOD BATTLED EVIL IN A DEADLY DUEL, UNTIL--  
WITH A MIGHTY EFFORT--

I HELPED YOU SHAKE OFF HIS INFLUENCE  
ONCE, TOM-- AND WE'VE GOT TO DO IT  
AGAIN-- FOR KEEPS! IF YOU LOVE  
ME AND OUR LIFE TOGETHER--

USE THIS  
STAKE!

YES, OBEY YOUR  
MASTER--USE  
IT ON HER!  
HEAR MY  
VOICE--  
AND  
ACT!

YOU CAN'T--  
MAKE ME KILL  
WHAT I LOVE--  
YOU MONSTER!

NO, DON'T! I'LL  
GRANT YOU WEALTH,  
IMMORTALITY! I'LL--  
ARGH!

AFTER 500 YEARS--  
KILLED-- BY A MERE  
HUMAN! AND ONLY  
BECAUSE-- A WOMAN  
IN LOVE-- LEARNED--  
THAT AN OAKEN STAKE  
THROUGH THE HEART--  
STILLS A  
VAMPIRE  
FOREVER!

IT-- IT'S ALL  
OVER! I'M  
FREE AT  
LAST!

AND WITH THE DEATH OF THEIR FIENDISH MASTER  
LEROY'S "HERD" BECAME--

-- DUST!  
THEY'VE  
CRUMBLEO  
INTO  
NOTHING-  
NESS!

THEY WERE KEPT ALIVE ONLY BY HIS  
WILL, POOR DEVILS! BUT NOW  
THEY'VE FOUND  
PEACE AT  
LAST!

NEXT DAY--  
HEY! WHAT  
IS THIS! YOU  
AND YOUR CRAZY  
STORIES ABOUT VAMPIRES!  
WE COULDN'T FIND ANY  
CORPSES THERE-- AND  
THERE WAS JUST A HEAP  
OF DUST IN THE BARN!

ER-- PERHAPS  
MY HUSBAND  
WAS JUST  
OVER-EXCITED--  
AND HAD A  
NIGHTMARE!

LATER--  
I-- I  
DON'T KNOW  
WHAT TO THINK  
ANYMORE-- MY  
HEAD'S IN A WHIRL  
--WAS  
IT JUST  
A DREAM,  
SUE?

I HAD TO TELL THE SERGEANT  
THAT! HE'D NEVER  
BELIEVE THE TRUTH!  
AND IF YOU DON'T  
BELIEVE IT-- JUST  
TRY DREAMING  
AWAY THIS SILVER  
CHAIN!

THE  
END





THIS IS THE STORY OF A PACT...  
 ...A MIDNIGHT BARGAIN BETWEEN  
 A MAN WHO DESERVED TO DIE...  
 AND THE CREATURES OF DARKNESS  
 WHO SOUGHT OUT HIS LONELY GRAVE!  
 THE NEXT THREE NIGHTS SAW TWO IN-  
 CREDIBLE CHANGES TAKE PLACE...ONE  
 OF THEM WRITHING WITH HORROR...  
 AND THE OTHER SENDING AN UNWILLING  
 VICTIM TOWARD THE JAWS OF  
**THE HOWLING HUNTERS!**



AT A SMALL COUNTRY COURTHOUSE...

HAVE YOU ANYTHING TO SAY  
 BEFORE THIS COURT PASSES  
 SENTENCE UPON YOU?

GET IT OVER WITH!  
 I WASN'T AFRAID WHEN  
 I SHOT THOSE BANK  
 GUARDS...AND I'M  
**NOT AFRAID  
 NOW!**



AS THE FATAL WORDS DRONE ABOVE THE MURMUR OF  
 VOICES, A STRANGE FIGURE STANDS AT THE BACK OF  
 THE CHAMBER...HIS GLOWING EYES FIXED ON THE DOOM-  
 ED MAN!

...AND THE VERDICT OF THIS  
 COURT IS THAT YOU SHALL BE  
 TAKEN TO A PLACE DESIGNATED  
 BY LAW...AND THERE HANG-  
**ED BY THE NECK UNTIL  
 DEAD!**

DEFIANT...VICIOUS...  
 JUST THE TYPE I NEED!  
 I CAN'T SAVE HIM FROM  
 THE GALLOW...BUT  
**HE WON'T  
 DIE!**



SOME TIME LATER...

MY SON---IT ISN'T TOO LATE TO REPENT! YOU'RE GOING TO YOUR DEATH NOW---GIVE YOURSELF THE COMFORT OF DIVINE MERCY!

SKIP IT! I NEVER SHOWED MERCY--- I'M NOT GOING TO CRAWL FOR IT---I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS!



That night...IN A LONELY WOODLAND GRAVEYARD---

NOW THAT WE'VE RECOVERED HIS BODY, WE'LL SEE HOW MUCH IT IS WORTH... TO HIS GHOST!



Then...A DIABOLICAL INCANTATION RISES IN THE GLOOM!

KILLER WHO PAID THE LAW ITS DUE... THE HOWLING HUNTERS SUMMON YOU!



WHAT DID YOU BRING ME BACK FOR? WHO ARE YOU?

I AM THE WERE-WOLF LEADER...THE BEING WHO CAN GIVE YOU IMMORTAL LIFE...AS I HAVE GIVEN IT TO THEM!



THE PRICE IS SMALL... YOU MUST LOOK LIKE THEM---AND HUNT LIKE THEM... FOREVER!

I'LL DO IT! I'LL DO ANYTHING---JUST AS LONG AS I CAN LIVE!



Again...THE EVIL CADENCE OF A SPELL DRIFTS AMONG THE TOMBSTONES!

SPIRIT INTO BODY...BODY INTO LIFE...LIFE INTO HORROR!

SOMETHING'S CONTROLLING ME! IT'S IN THE COFFIN---DRAWING ME TOWARD IT!



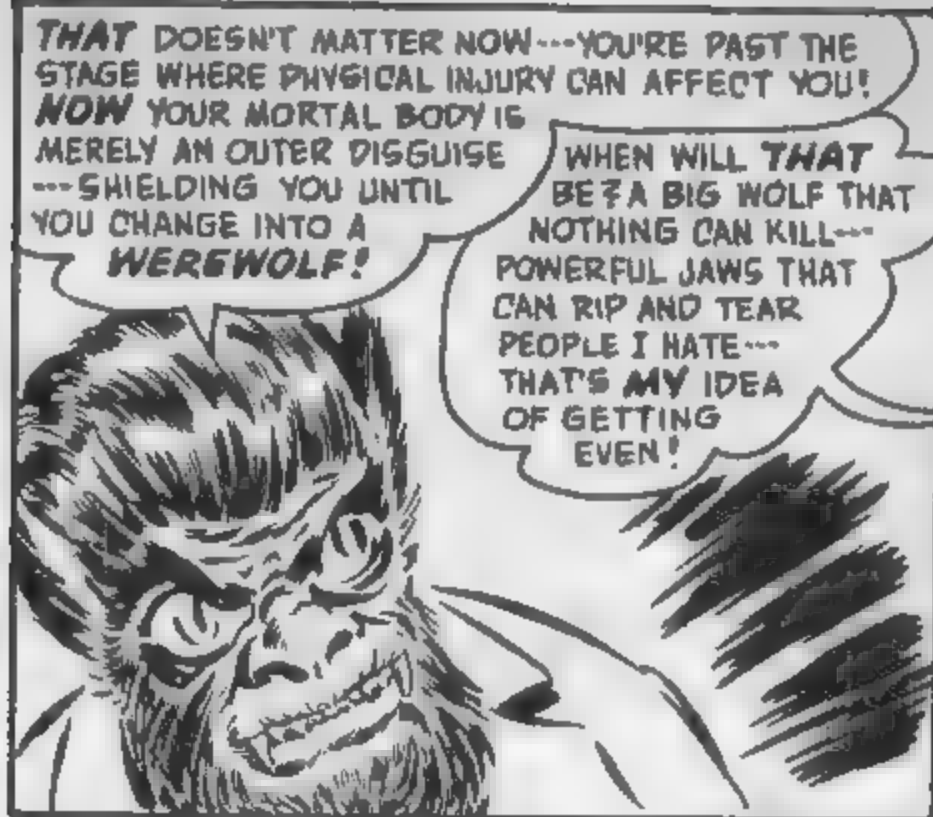
IN THE NEXT INSTANT...BODY INTO LIFE...LIFE INTO HORROR...AS GHOST AND CORPSE ARE FUSED!

AAAAGH!

MY NECK---IT'S BROKEN!

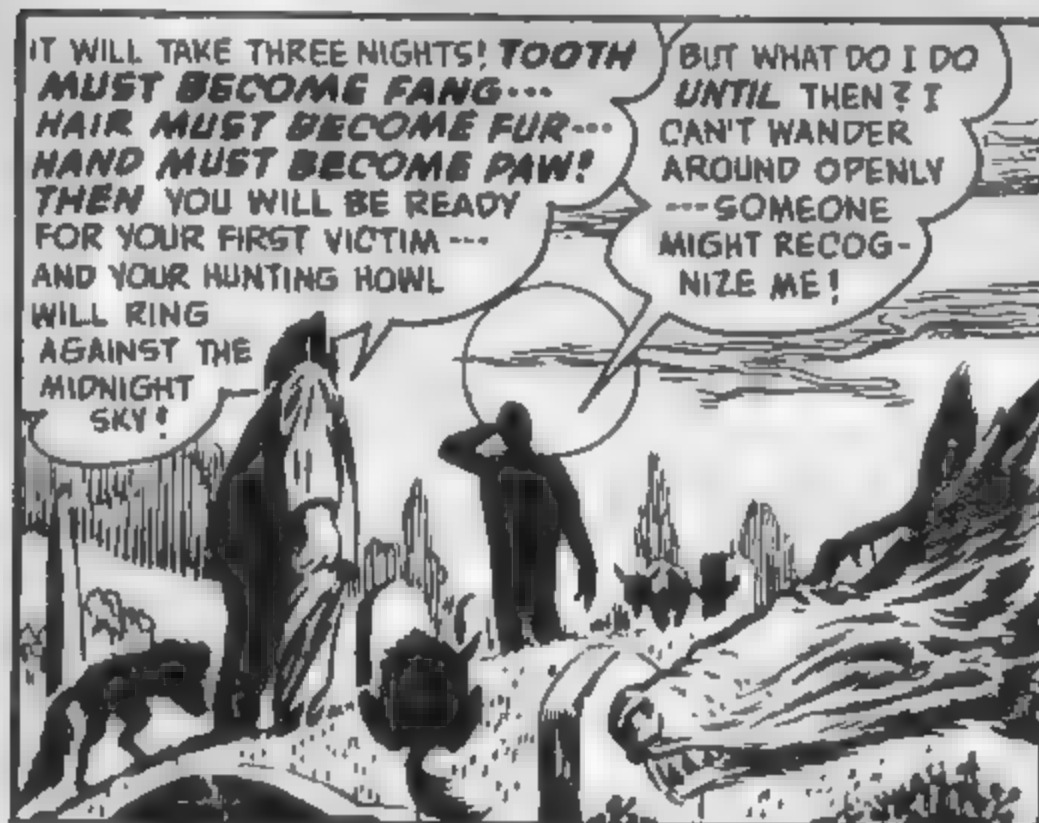






THAT DOESN'T MATTER NOW---YOU'RE PAST THE STAGE WHERE PHYSICAL INJURY CAN AFFECT YOU! NOW YOUR MORTAL BODY IS MERELY AN OUTER DISGUISE ---SHIELDING YOU UNTIL YOU CHANGE INTO A **WEREWOLF!**

WHEN WILL THAT BE? A BIG WOLF THAT NOTHING CAN KILL--- POWERFUL JAWS THAT CAN RIP AND TEAR PEOPLE I HATE--- THAT'S MY IDEA OF GETTING EVEN!



IT WILL TAKE THREE NIGHTS! **TOOTH MUST BECOME FANG--- HAIR MUST BECOME FUR--- HAND MUST BECOME PAW! THEN YOU WILL BE READY FOR YOUR FIRST VICTIM --- AND YOUR HUNTING HOWL WILL RING AGAINST THE MIDNIGHT SKY!**

BUT WHAT DO I DO UNTIL THEN? I CAN'T WANDER AROUND OPENLY ---SOMEONE MIGHT RECOGNIZE ME!

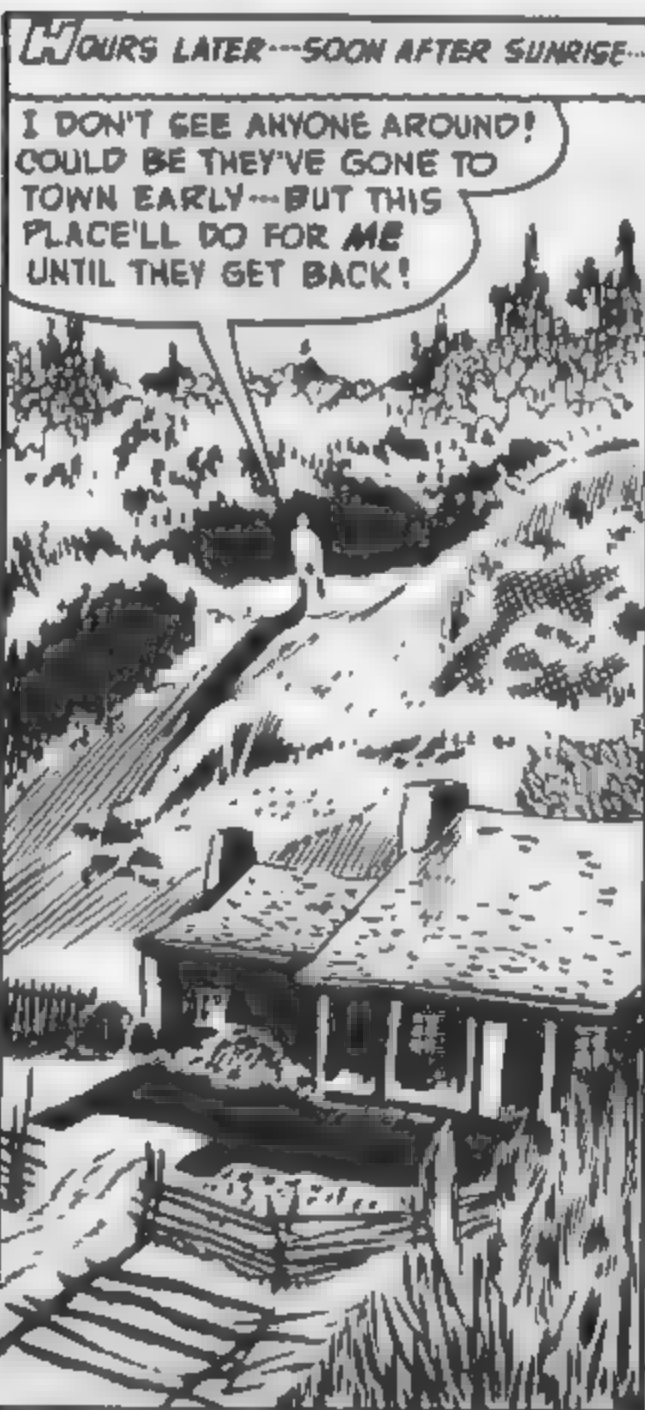
Then...AS AN UNEARTHLY CHORUS QUAVERS INTO THE NIGHT---



HIDE---ANYWHERE! YOU BEAR THE MARK OF THE WEREWOLF ---AND WE CAN ALWAYS FIND OUR OWN!

**AAOOO! AAOOO!**

A WEREWOLF! EVEN THEY KNOW I'LL BE LIKE THEM IN JUST THREE MORE DAYS---THEY'RE HOWLING FOR ME!



HOURS LATER---SOON AFTER SUNRISE---

I DON'T SEE ANYONE AROUND! COULD BE THEY'VE GONE TO TOWN EARLY---BUT THIS PLACE'LL DO FOR ME UNTIL THEY GET BACK!



TIPTOEING IN, THE MAN WHO LIVED AGAIN SEES---

**BLAZES! THERE IS SOMEONE---AND SHE'S SPOTTED ME!**

BILL! YOU ---YOU ARE BILL, AREN'T YOU?



FOR AN INSTANT, THE DOOMED MAN HESITATES! THE THOUGHT FLASHES THROUGH HIS MIND THAT IT WOULD BE EASY TO KILL HER, BUT MAYBE--- MAYBE---IT WOULD BE EASIER TO LIE!

YEP---SURE I'M BILL! HOW'D YOU GUESS?

WHO ELSE WOULD FIND HIS WAY HERE ---BUT MY BROTHER? OF COURSE, I'D FORGOTTEN WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE---I WAS AWFULLY SMALL WHEN YOU LEFT HOME---BUT I REMEMBER TELLING MYSELF YOU'D COME BACK TO US!





US?

YES---MOTHER AND DAD AND I! BILL, THEY---THEY BOTH DIED LAST YEAR! THEY TOLD ME TO WAIT FOR YOU---SO YOU'D HAVE A ROOF OVER YOUR HEAD WHEN YOU GOT BACK---AND I DID!



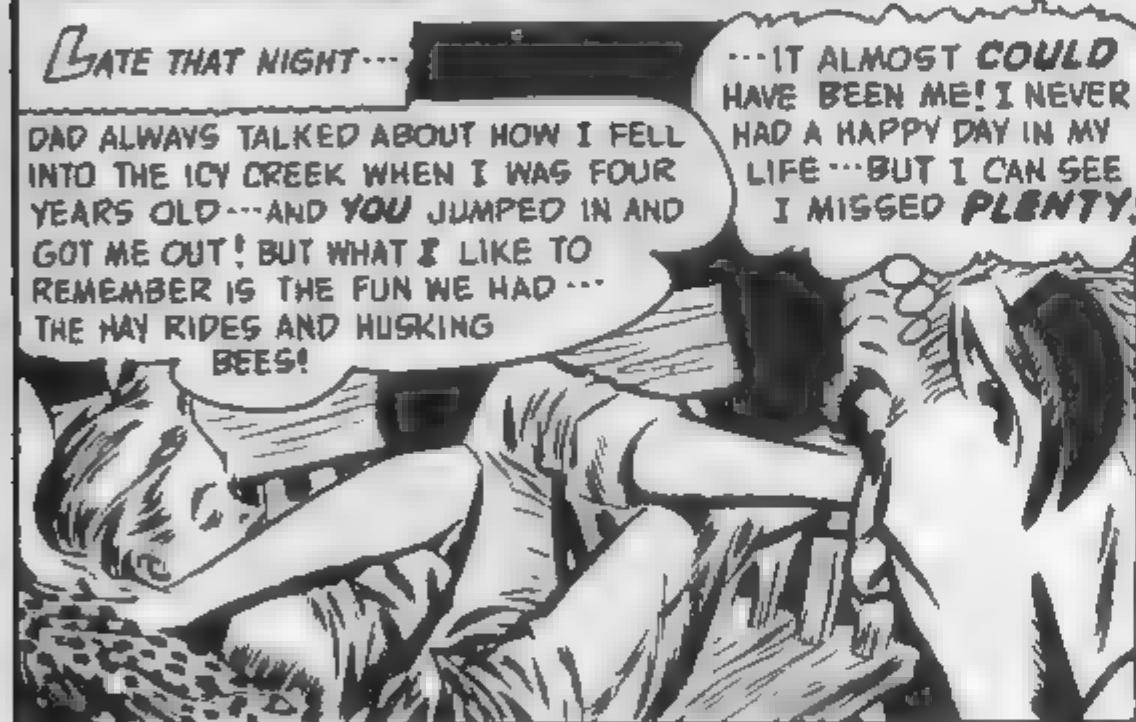
GOSH---I NEVER THOUGHT THERE WERE PEOPLE LIKE THIS! THE OLD FOLKS WORRYING ABOUT THEIR GON---AND SHE THINKING I'M HER BROTHER---THE BROTHER SHE WAITED FOR A WHOLE YEAR IN THIS GOD-FORSAKEN PLACE---ALONE!

GOOD HEAVENS, BILL---WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU? WHAT'S THIS HORRIBLE RED MARK ON YOUR NECK?



JUST AN OLD SCAR---NOT EVEN WORTH TALKING ABOUT!

BILL, I SHOULD HAVE NOTICED IT BEFORE! YOU'RE WORN OUT---HALF STARVED---YOU'VE GOT TO REST WHILE I GET THE STOVE STARTED!



LATE THAT NIGHT---

DAD ALWAYS TALKED ABOUT HOW I FELL INTO THE ICY CREEK WHEN I WAS FOUR YEARS OLD---AND YOU JUMPED IN AND GOT ME OUT! BUT WHAT I LIKE TO REMEMBER IS THE FUN WE HAD---THE HAY RIDES AND HUSKING BEES!

---IT ALMOST COULD HAVE BEEN ME! I NEVER HAD A HAPPY DAY IN MY LIFE---BUT I CAN SEE I MISSED PLENTY!



SUDDENLY---RISING LIKE AN EVIL SIGNAL ABOVE THE STIRRING PINES---

AAOOOOO!

BILL---WHAT'S THAT? IT CAN'T BE A WOLF---THERE HAVEN'T BEEN ANY AROUND HERE FOR YEARS!



A SECOND LATER---

OHH!

YOU CRAZY LITTLE FOOL---GET BACK!

GAARRR!



AS THE SHAGGY FORM LOPES INTO THE DARKNESS---

WHY'D YOU OPEN THE DOOR? DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT THING IS---DO YOU REALIZE WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED TO YOU?

BUT IT'S GONE, BILL---AND I DON'T SEE WHY IT CAME SNIFFING AROUND IN THE FIRST PLACE! WAIT A MINUTE---WHAT'S THIS LYING ON THE FLOOR?





THAT'S STRANGE!  
WHITE...POINTED...  
GOOD HEAVENS, BILL...  
--IT'S A FANG!



GIVE ME THAT! WHO  
TOLD YOU TO TOUCH  
IT?

THERE'S NOTHING TO GET MAD  
ABOUT, BILL! WAIT...LET ME  
LOOK AT  
YOU!



I NEVER NOTICED IT  
BEFORE, BUT YOU HAVE  
A TOOTH MISSING...A  
SIDE TOOTH!

SO WHAT?  
I LOST IT  
YEARS  
AGO...WHAT  
ARE YOU  
DRIVING  
AT?



TOOTH MUST BECOME FANG  
...THIS IS THE FIRST NIGHT...  
BUT I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD  
BE LIKE THIS! SOMEHOW I...  
I HOPE THE KID DOESN'T  
FIND OUT!



THE FOLLOWING NIGHT...WITH COLD  
MOONLIGHT ETCHING A PATTERN OF  
SHADOWS ACROSS THE CLEARING...

PSSST!  
WAIT!



AS THE SPECTRAL WOLF STOPS...ITS BLAZING EYES  
ALIVE IN THE DARKNESS...

I WAS EXPECTING YOU! IF  
YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING  
FOR ME...YOU CAN GIVE  
IT TO ME HERE!



A THROATY CHUCKLE BREAKS FROM THE SHAGGY FORM...  
AND AS IT REARS AND QUIVERS IN THE FEEBLE YELLOW  
LIGHT...

ARRRGH!  
GAA...  
HA HA!

IT'S CHANGING!  
THAT'S SOMETHING I'LL  
BE ABLE TO DO...BY  
TOMORROW  
NIGHT!



**A** SECOND LATER...

YOU DIDN'T WANT ME TO GO TO THE CABIN, EH? DO YOU THINK SHE'S LYING AWAKE, WONDERING ABOUT THE FANG... DO YOU THINK SHE MIGHT SEE SOMETHING?

NEVER MIND THAT---LET'S STICK TO OUR BARGAIN! MY HAIR---WHAT ABOUT IT?

THE DEAD MEN WALK... THE GRAVEYARDS STIR! FROM THIS HOUR... HAVE WEREWOLF FUR!

IT'S FUR, ALL RIGHT! BUT I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD BE SO THICK... SO NOTICE-ABLE!

WHY SHOULDN'T IT BE? AFTER TOMORROW NIGHT IT WON'T MATTER... WILL IT?



ME... I CAN TAKE ANYTHING! I JUST DON'T WANT IT TO MATTER TO HER... THAT'S ALL!

HA-HA! TONIGHT A KILLER... TOMORROW A WEREWOLF... AND HE'S ACTUALLY CONCERNED ABOUT AN ORDINARY HUMAN! BUT SINCE I MUST FIND HIM A FIRST VICTIM... I WAS JUST WONDERING... WHO?



NEXT EVENING...

BILL... YOU HAVEN'T LEFT THE ATTIC ALL DAY! IS SOMETHING WRONG... ARE YOU SICK?

NOK NOK!

WAIT... DON'T COME UP!



SLOWLY, THE TRAP DOOR INCHES UP... AND GLINTING WITH A STRANGE INTENSITY... TWO BLAZING EYES STARE OUT!

KID, YOU'VE GOT TO PULL OUT OF HERE! DON'T ASK ME WHY... DON'T WAIT TO PACK... GET MOVING!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND, BILL! IF YOU'RE AFRAID... IF YOU'RE HIDING... FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, TELL ME ABOUT IT!



NOT NOW... LATER! I WANT YOU TO HEAD FOR TOWN... HEAR ME?

ALL RIGHT, BILL! IT'S TWELVE MILES AWAY, AND IT'LL TAKE ME HOURS... BUT I'LL DO WHAT YOU SAY!





I'LL NEVER SEE HER AGAIN---AND THANK GOD,  
SHE WON'T SEE ME! SO LONG, KID---AND THANKS  
FOR TREATING ME LIKE --- A HUMAN!



AS DARKNESS CREEPS INTO THE ATTIC LIKE A BLACK  
PRESENCE---AND THE WAKING BATS SCRATCH AND RUSTLE  
AMONG THE BARE RAFTERS---

IT'S IN THE CARDS---THE THIRD NIGHT---WHEN  
**HAND MUST BECOME PAW!** MAYBE I'LL  
FEEL BETTER ABOUT IT AFTER I'VE CHANGED---  
WHEN I'M TRACKING DOWN MY FIRST VICTIM!  
IT'LL BE A STRANGER THEN---NOT SOMEONE  
I'VE GOTTEN TO KNOW---  
**LIKE HER!**



Then, from far off---RISING AND FADING THROUGH THE  
MISTY WOODS---



THEY'RE COMING! THERE'S NO  
USE WISHING **NOW** I'D HAD A  
BETTER LIFE---OR AN EASIER  
DEATH! I MADE MY BARGAIN  
--- **AND I'M KEEPING**  
**IT!**

BUT AS THE SLOW MINUTES PASS ---



THEY'RE STILL BAYING AROUND  
THE WOODS! IT COULDN'T BE  
THEY'VE FOUND A VICTIM OUT  
THERE---NO ONE WOULD BE  
WALKING AROUND IN THE  
DARKNESS---**UNLESS---**



...GOOD LORD  
...THE KID!



IN THE NEXT PULSING INSTANT---

MY HANDS! THEY'RE  
TIGHTENING---MY FINGERS  
ARE GETTING NUMB---  
**AND I KNOW WHY!**



**HAND MUST  
BECOME PAW  
---NOW---NOW  
---WHEN I CAN'T  
OPEN THE  
DOOR!**



FOR A SECOND, THE PANTING FIGURE  
TURNS DESPERATELY---AND THEN---



WHAT WAS IT THAT SPED THROUGH THE NIGHT WITH GASPING BOUNDS? NOT  
A MAN, CERTAINLY---NOT A PHANTOM---NOT A WEREWOLF! IT WAS A **WILL**---  
HEEDLESS OF ITS OWN DOOM AS IT RACED TOWARD THE HOWLING HUNTERS!



MINUTES LATER---IN A SPOT CHARGED WITH EVIL---

YOU'VE GOT HER! IF SHE'S  
BEEN HARMED---IF YOU'VE SO  
MUCH AS TOUCHED HER---

DO YOU THINK WE **WOULD**? SHE  
FAINTED AS THE PACK CLOSED IN---  
BUT WE'VE LEFT HER FOR YOU!  
SHE SHOULD REVIVE SOON---JUST  
IN TIME TO SEE YOUR **FINAL**  
CHANGE---AND AWAIT YOUR  
**JAWS** IN THE LAST  
MINUTE OF HER  
LIFE!



THE WORDS CAME SLOWLY---HARSH,  
DEEP-THROATED WORDS THAT SOME-  
TIMES BROKE OFF INTO A GROWL!

YOU THOUGHT YOU MADE A  
BARGAIN WITH THE LOWEST  
KIND OF HUMAN---A **KILLER**!  
BUT I **DIED** TO PAY FOR THAT  
---I SETTLED MY BARGAIN  
WITH A ROPE! NOW I'M READY  
TO DIE **AGAIN** BEFORE I  
BECOME A WEREWOLF---

---BEFORE I LET  
YOU DO ANYTHING  
TO HER!



YES, YOU'LL DIE---  
TORN APART BY A  
DOZEN RIPPING  
JAWS! AND WHEN  
THE PACK IS  
FINISHED WITH  
**YOU**---WHAT DO  
YOU THINK WILL  
HAPPEN TO  
**HER**?

YOU **BLACK-  
HEARTED FIEND**!  
I THOUGHT I WAS  
**THROUGH** KILLING  
WHEN I MOUNTED  
THE SCAFFOLD---







...BUT I WAS  
WRONG!



The NEXT MOMENT SAW A FURRY  
MASS ENGULF A TOTTERING FIGURE...

AROOO!

GARRGH!



...AND A DEATH GRIP THAT TIGHTENED  
...IN A CLUTCH THAT NOTHING COULD  
BREAK!

AAAH...  
AAAH...

**B**UT THE FURRY KILLERS HAD GOTTEN IN THEIR WORK...AND A MAN  
DIED AGAIN! WITH HIM, HE TOOK INTO ETERNITY THE EVIL LEADER  
OF THE WEREWOLVES...WHOSE DEATH SEALED THE DOOM OF THE  
GHOSTLY PACK!



AAAGH!



A MOMENT LATER...

**BILL!** HE MUST HAVE DRIVEN OFF  
THE WOLVES AFTER I FAINTED...  
BUT WHAT'S HAPPENED TO  
HIM?

**T**HE WRIST THE GIRL RAISED HAD NO  
PULSE...AND IT HAD NO PAW! IT WAS THE  
LIFELESS LIMB OF A MAN WHO HAD DIED  
AGAIN...AND REDEEMED HIMSELF!



**HE'S DEAD!** BUT THAT  
ANCHOR BILL HAD TATTOOED  
ON HIS ARM... WHERE IS IT?  
THIS MAN ISN'T MY  
BROTHER... HE'S  
A STRANGER!



I'LL NEVER KNOW WHO HE WAS...AND THE  
QUESTIONS I WANTED TO ASK WILL NEVER  
BE ANSWERED! BUT WHEN BILL COMES BACK  
...AND I KNOW HE **WILL** COME BACK...  
I'LL TAKE HIM TO THE GRAVE OF A  
**FRIEND!**

THE END



# Captain CROSSBONES



THERE WAS A TIME WHEN KING PHILIP OF SPAIN --- MASTER OF THE GREATEST REALM SINCE THE ROMAN EMPIRE --- LAID CLAIM TO THE THRONE OF ENGLAND! FOR YEARS, SEA RAIDERS LIKE **CAPTAIN CROSSBONES** HAD MOCKED SPANISH POWER AND PLUNDERED SPANISH GOLD... BUT FINALLY THE GRANDEES OF CASTILE MADE READY FOR REVENGE --- TO BE METED OUT BY **TIGRE DEL MAR**... THE DREAD **SEA TIGER**, ON THE PROWL FOR ENGLISH BLOOD!

*Robert West*

LATE ONE NIGHT... ATOP THE TOWER OF LONDON...

I KNOW I SHOULDN'T HAVE VENTURED OUT THIS LATE ALONE... BUT AN URGENT NOTE TOLD ME NOT TO FAIL TO COME HERE... **IN SECRET!**



Then... AS A TALL FIGURE STRIDES THROUGH THE HAZE...

**CAPTAIN CROSSBONES!**

I'M GLAD YOU DIDN'T FAIL ME, LADY NANCY!



DARLING... I THOUGHT THE **RED ROVER** WAS ANCHORED IN THE SEA ROAD... A FULL THIRTY MILES AWAY!

IT IS... WE'VE BEEN MARKING TIME UNTIL THE QUEEN'S COUNCIL DECIDES WHETHER TO RENEW THE WAR AGAINST SPAIN! BUT I HAD TO SPEND AN HOUR ALONE WITH YOU, SWEETHEART... **WITHOUT THE QUEEN KNOWING I'M ASHORE!**





THE QUEEN IS SURE OF PEACE...AND MY APPEARANCE AT THE COURT MIGHT MEAN A ROYAL COMMAND TO MAKE A LONG VOYAGE...**THE VERY THING I WANT TO AVOID!** I HAVE NO PROOF THAT WOULD SATISFY THE QUEEN...BUT I'VE LEARNED KING PHILIP OF SPAIN HAS A NEW PLOT AFOOT...AND I'VE DECIDED TO STAY CLOSE TO ENGLAND!



AT THAT MOMENT... A DARKENED VESSEL GLIDES TOWARD THE TOWER WALL!

LOOK...THE ROGUES ARE THROWING TORCHES!

AY...THEY'RE FIRING THE THREE LARGEST SHIPS OF THE QUEEN'S NAVY!



AN INSTANT LATER...FROM A TOPMAST PLAUNTING THE COLORS OF CASTILE...



GOOD HEAVENS, CROSSBONES...WHAT'S HAPPENING?

IT'S A SPANISH RAID...LED BY A SCURVY VARLET WITH WHOM I'VE CROSSED BLADES ONCE BEFORE!



IN THE RUDDY GLARE OF THE MOUNTING FLAMES...

ARRIBA! OUR WAY IS CLEAR TO THE CHAMBER THAT GUARDS THE SYMBOLS OF ENGLISH POWER!



HAN! THE BOASTFUL ENGLISH WILL LEARN THAT NO MERE HANDFUL OF GUARDS CAN HOLD ANY TERRORS FOR ME...**TIGRE DEL MAR!**



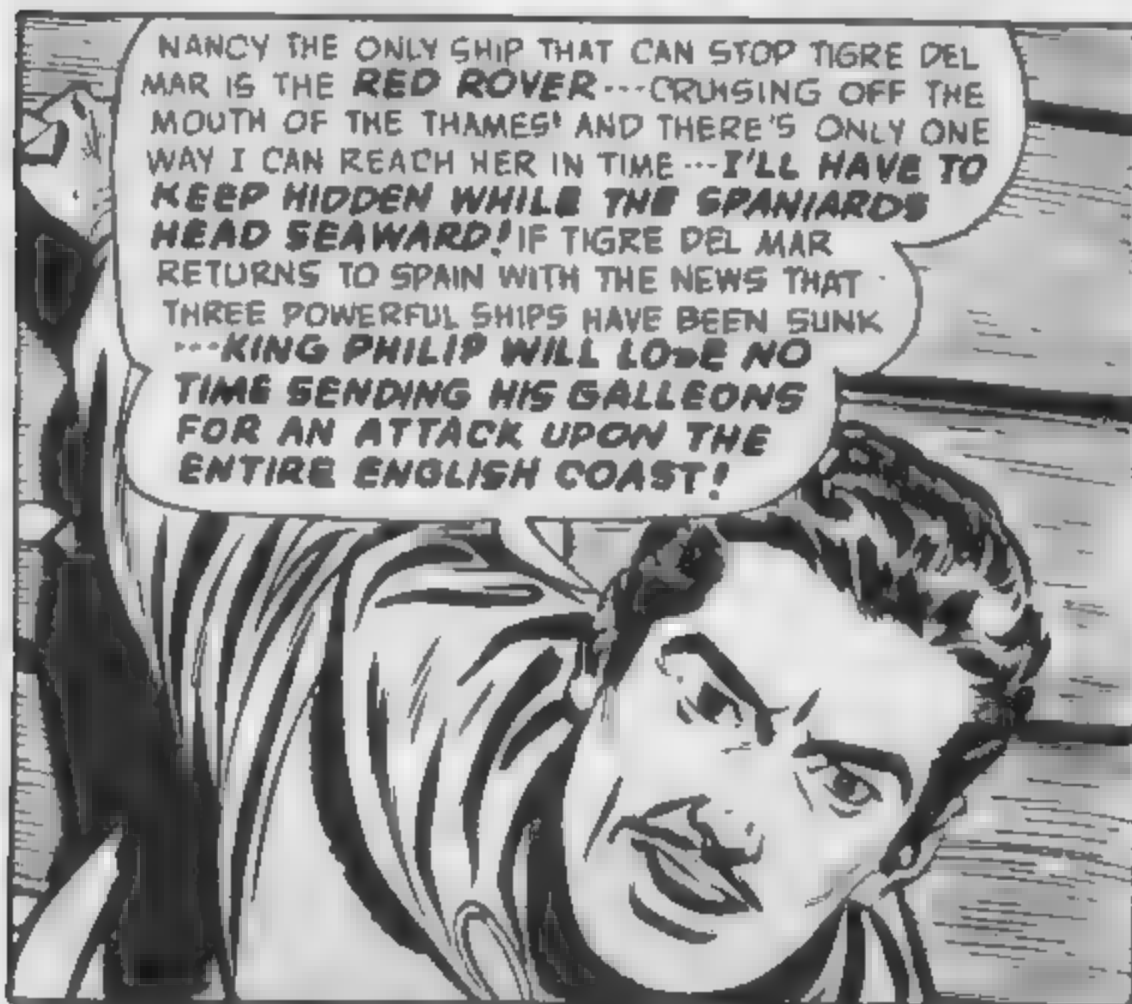
**TIGRE DEL MAR...THE SEA TIGER!** HE'S THE BLACK-HEARTED BUCANNEER WHO CARRIES OUT SPECIAL MISSIONS FOR THE KING OF SPAIN...AND THIS DARING ATTACK ON THE TOWER ITSELF MAKES IT PLAIN WHAT HE'S AFTER **THIS TIME...THE CROWN AND SCEPTER OF ENGLAND!**



















AS THE SPANISH SHIP HEADS INTO THE CHANNEL---

GET UP! WE'LL SAIL OUT OF THE THAMES WITH YOU SWAYING BY A ROPE FROM THE YARDARM --- A FINAL MOCKERY TO THE ENGLISH FOOLS WHO CANNOT EVEN HOLD ON TO THEIR ROYAL CROWN!



AND WHAT ABOUT RED ROVER...

LAYING TO JUST OUTSIDE THE THAMES? AT THE FIRST GLIMPSE OF MY BODY THROUGH DUKE'S SPYGLASS... YOU AND YOUR BARNACLED HULK WILL BE LIFTED OUT OF THE WATER BY A BROADSIDE!

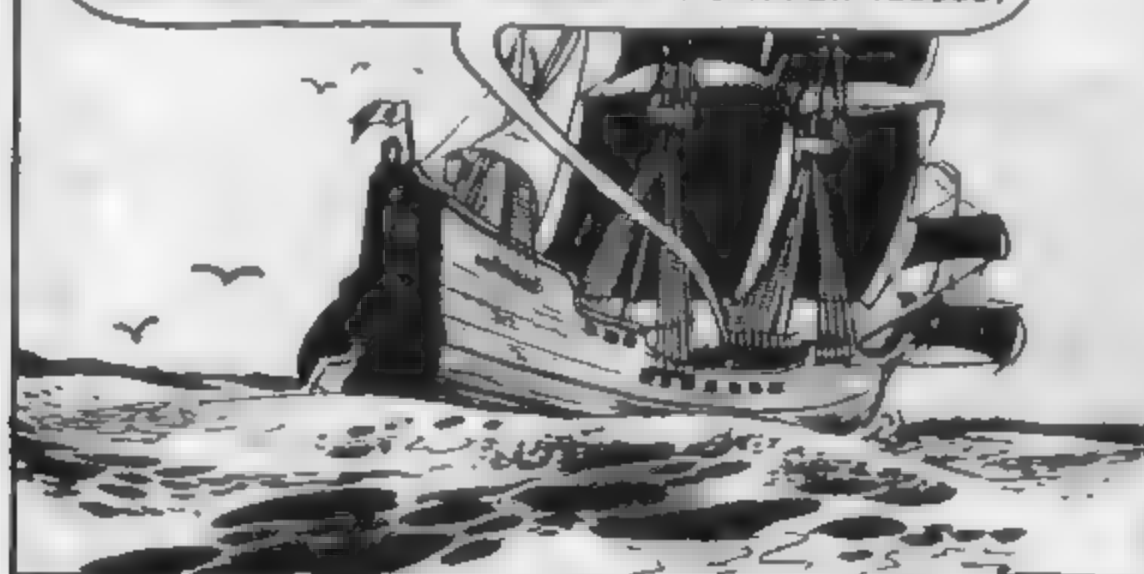
FOR AN INSTANT, CROSSBONES STUDIES THE SHIFTING GLANCES OF THE SPANIARDS... LIKE JACKALS ON THE TRAIL OF EASY PREY!

AND IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY THE RED ROVER HASN'T PUT OUT TO SEA... I'LL TELL YOU PLAINLY! SHE'S WAITING FOR THE FIRST SEA LORD TO BRING WORD OF EITHER PEACE OR WAR WITH SPAIN!

WAITING, EH? AND SUPPOSE... SUPPOSE HER CREW THOUGHT IT WAS PEACE?



YOU WILL BE THE FIRST SEA LORD, CROSSBONES --- WEARING THE FINERY OF AN ENGLISH ADMIRAL WE CAPTURED AT CADIZ! DISGUISED, YOU'LL CROSS TO THE RED ROVER IN OUR LONGBOAT --- AND YOU'LL HAVE A BRACE OF HIDDEN PISTOLS POINTED AT YOUR HEART TO MAKE SURE YOU PLAY YOUR PART WELL! YOU'LL PRETEND PEACE HAS BEEN DECLARED... AND THAT TO PROVE HER FRIENDSHIP FOR SPAIN, THE QUEEN HAS SENT HER FIRST SEA LORD DOWN THE THAMES IN A SPANISH VESSEL!



THE CREW OF THE RED ROVER IS TO BE MUSTERED ON DECK IN CEREMONIAL ARRAY... WHILE THE TWO SHIPS DRAW ALONGSIDE AND EXCHANGE FLAGS! THAT WILL MEAN THEIR GUNS WILL BE UNMANNED... THEY'LL BE GROUPED FOR SLAUGHTER WHEN WE OPEN UP WITH A BROADSIDE THAT SWEEPS THE QUARTERDECK! AFTER THAT... MY BOARDING PARTY WILL HAVE LITTLE TO DO OTHER THAN KILL OFF THE WOUNDED!

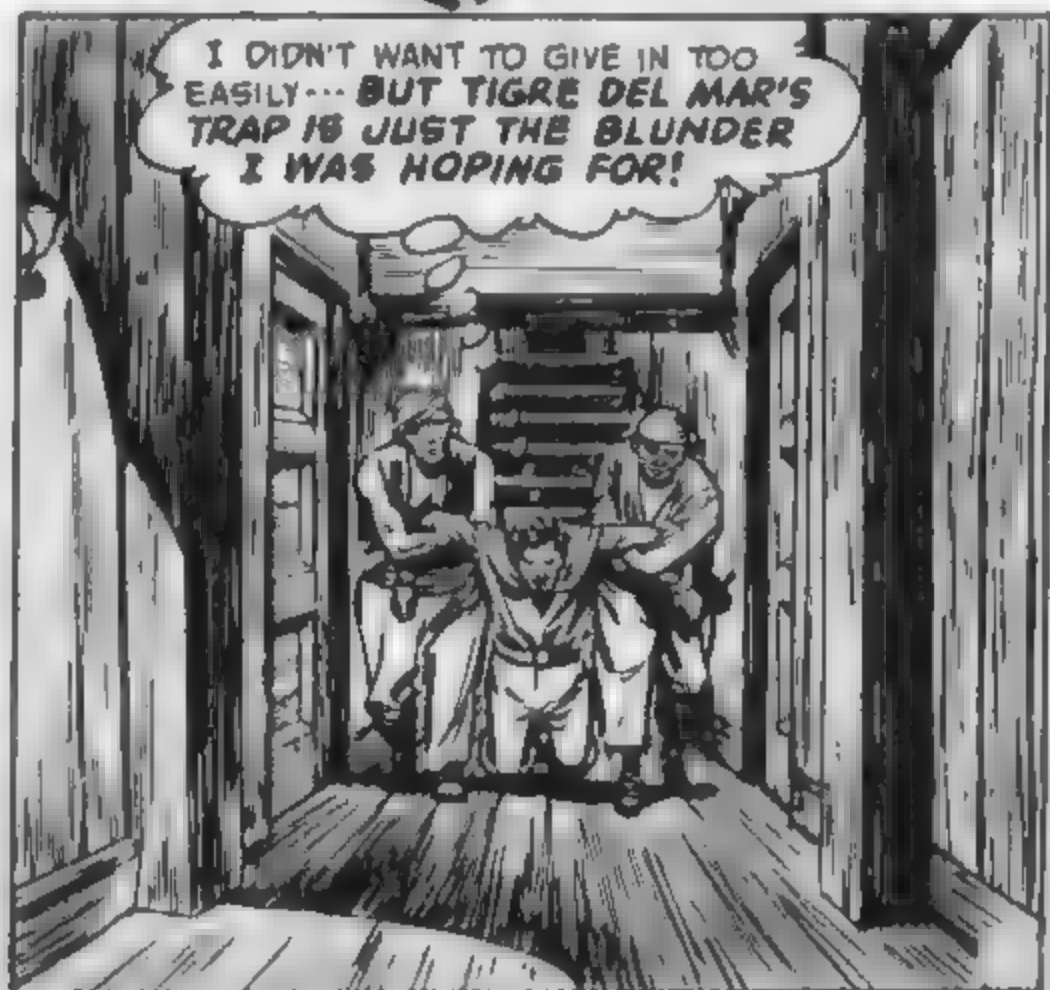
YOUR PLAN LACKS ONLY A TRAITOR, ROGUE... AND YOU WON'T FIND ONE NAMED CROSSBONES!

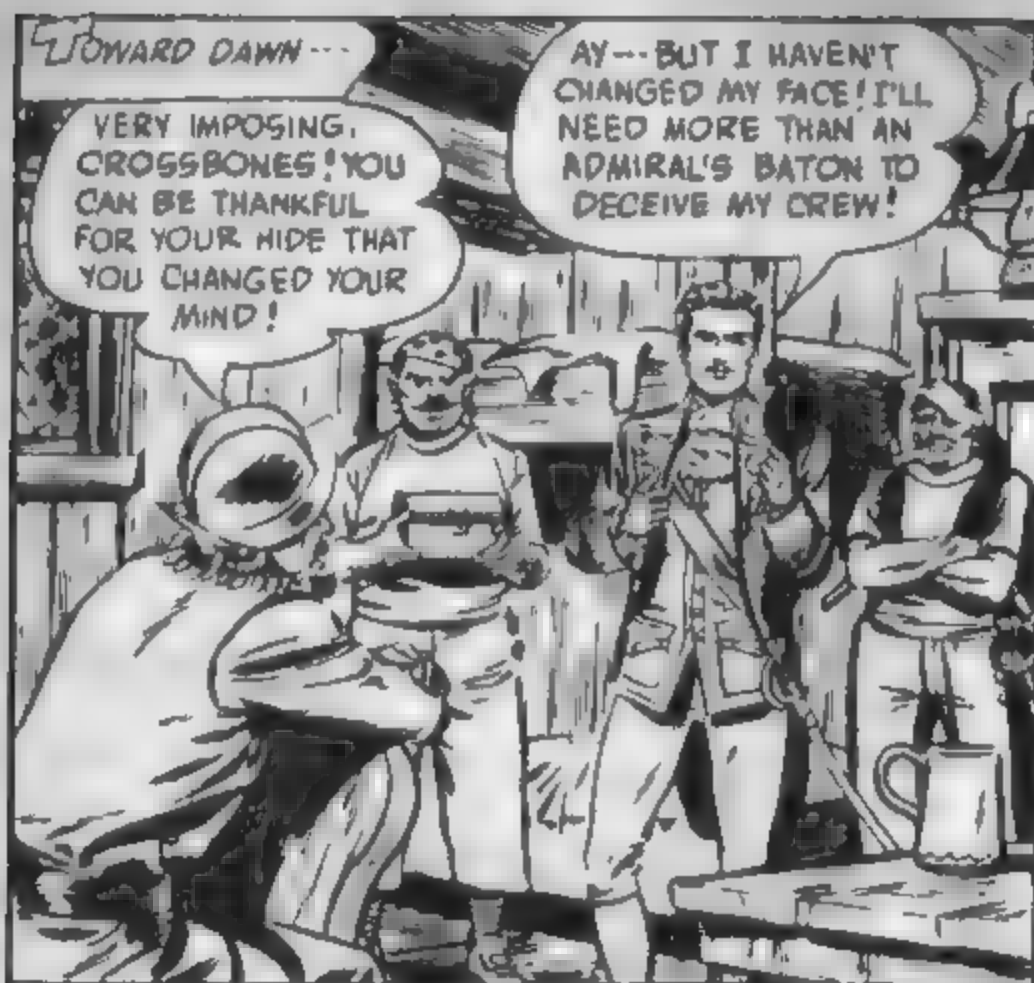


YOU'LL CHANGE YOUR MIND, MY FRIEND... OR BE KEELHAULED UNTIL YOUR SPINE IS LAID BARE!



I DIDN'T WANT TO GIVE IN TOO EASILY... BUT TIGRE DEL MAR'S TRAP IS JUST THE BLUNDER I WAS HOPING FOR!





LOWARD DAWN...

VERY IMPOSING, CROSSBONES! YOU CAN BE THANKFUL FOR YOUR HIDE THAT YOU CHANGED YOUR MIND!

AY-- BUT I HAVEN'T CHANGED MY FACE! I'LL NEED MORE THAN AN ADMIRAL'S BATON TO DECEIVE MY CREW!



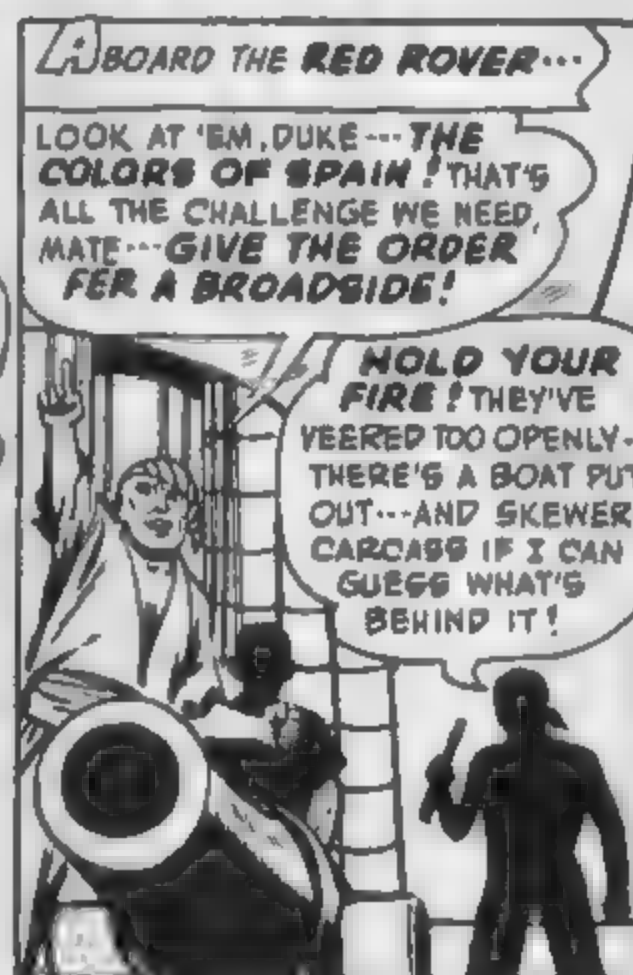
BUT SUPPOSE YOU CLOSELY RESEMBLE THIS MINIATURE OF THE FIRST SEA LORD? HOSEIN HAS LEARNED THE ART OF DISGUISE IN THE COURTS OF THE CALIPHS-- AND HE HAS DECEIVED FAR SHREWER MEN THAN YOUR SCURVY CUTTHROATS!



SOON AFTERWARD...

NOW COMES THE TEST! UNLESS I PLAY MY PART WELL-- THE RED ROVER IS AS GOOD AS SCUTTLED!

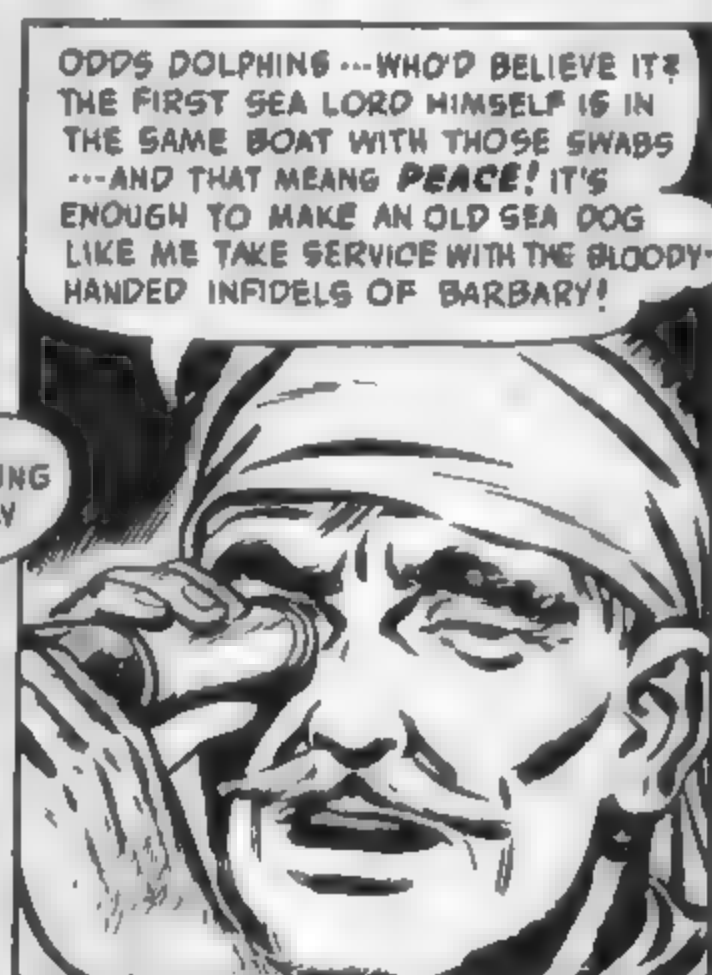
REMEMBER, BE ON GUARD --AND BLAST HIM TO HIS TRIPES AT THE FIRST SIGN OF TREACHERY!



ABOARD THE RED ROVER...

LOOK AT 'EM, DUKE-- THE COLORS OF SPAIN! THAT'S ALL THE CHALLENGE WE NEED, MATE-- GIVE THE ORDER FOR A BROADSIDE!

HOLD YOUR FIRE! THEY'VE VEERED TOO OPENLY-- THERE'S A BOAT PUTTING OUT-- AND SKEWER MY CARCASS IF I CAN GUESS WHAT'S BEHIND IT!



ODDS DOLPHING... WHO'D BELIEVE IT? THE FIRST SEA LORD HIMSELF IS IN THE SAME BOAT WITH THOSE SWABS --AND THAT MEANS PEACE! IT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE AN OLD SEA DOG LIKE ME TAKE SERVICE WITH THE BLOODY-HANDED INFIDELS OF BARBARY!



NO TRICKS, CROSSBONES --OR YOU DIE ON YOUR OWN DECK!

AS SECOND IN COMMAND, MILORD --I BID YOU WELCOME TO THE RED ROVER!



YOU NEED NOT BOW, MY GOOD MAN! ANY HUMBLE SEAMAN IS WORTHY OF MY HAND-- ESPECIALLY ONE WHO IS QUICK TO RECOGNIZE ME!

I'LL BE SCUPPERED --THAT BRAND ON HIS WRIST IS THE ROYAL CREST OF ENGLAND!

IN THAT SECOND, DUKE REALIZES SOMETHING THAT NO DISGUISE CAN CONCEAL-- THAT HE STANDS FACE TO FACE WITH CAPTAIN CROSSBONES!





I AM GLAD OUR SPANISH FRIENDS HAVE VEERED CLOSE ENOUGH TO HEAR MY VOICE, MILORD... BECAUSE I HEARTILY WISH THEM TO KNOW HOW PLEASED WE ARE TO HAVE YOU ABOARD! WHAT IS YOUR WISH?

I FEAR THE JOLLY ROGER IS AN INSULT TO THE ROYAL COLORS OF SPAIN! IT MUST BE LOWERED AS A SIGN OF RESPECT... AND RETURNED TO THE MASTHEAD... IN SUCH A WAY THAT YOUR CREW WILL UNDERSTAND THE PRESENT SITUATION!



PICKLE ME CARCASS... IF HIS LACE-TRIMMED LORDSHIP AIN'T OVER-QUICK TER MAKE US DIP **OUR** COLORS!

AY! IT'D BE A DIFFERENT STORY IF CROSSBONES WAS ABOARD... INSTEAD OF A COURTLY JACK-ANAPES WILLING TER DANCE TER THE SPANISH TUNE!



His TIGRE DEL MAR WATCHES...

AHA... CAPTAIN CROSSBONES IS PLAYING HIS PART WELL! THE ENGLISH RABBLE IS IDLING ON DECK, COMPLETELY OFF GUARD... **WHILE WE EDGE CLOSER!**

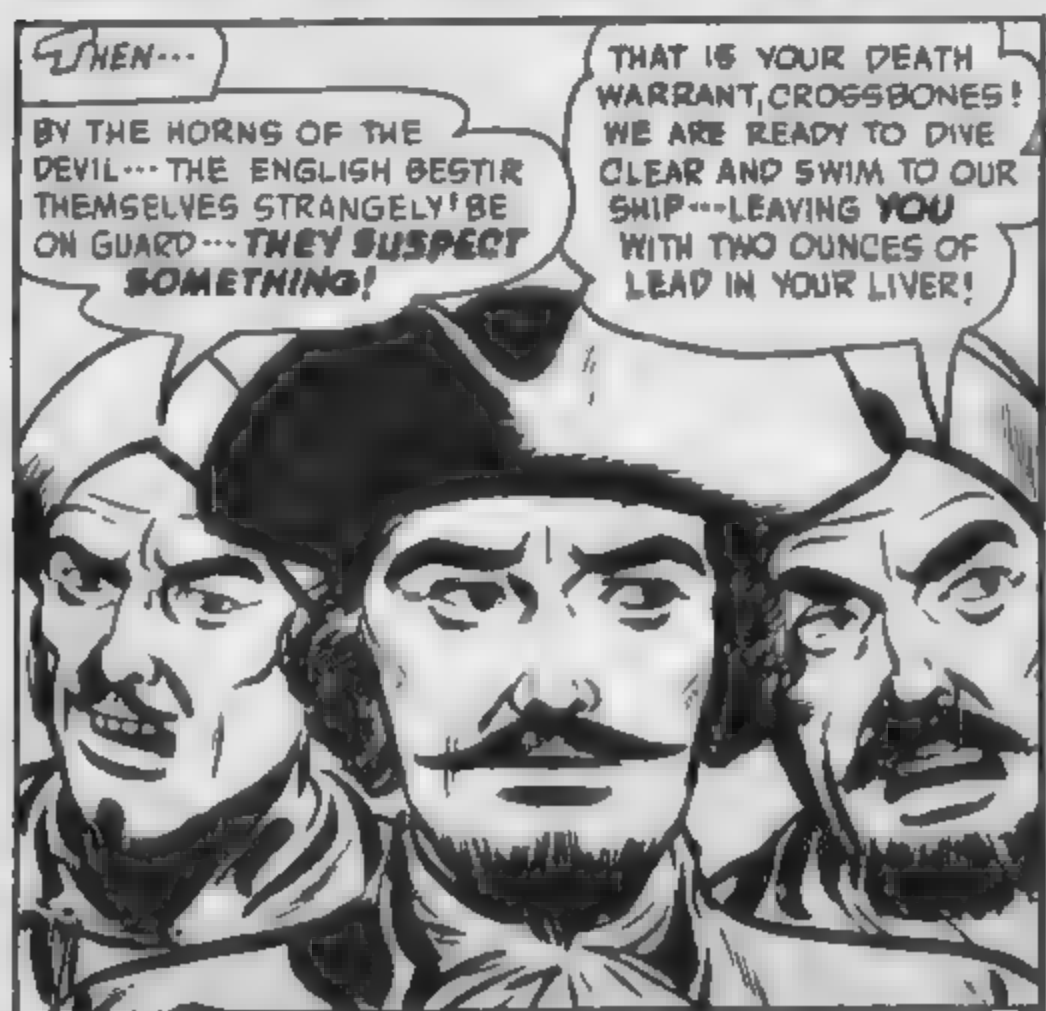


BUT AN INSTANT LATER...

PASS THE WORD... **THE JOLLY ROGER'S UPSIDE DOWN! LOOK TO YOUR GUNS!**



LOOK TO YOUR GUNS... AND LIVELY-O!



THEN...

BY THE HORNS OF THE DEVIL... THE ENGLISH BESTIR THEMSELVES STRANGELY! BE ON GUARD... **THEY SUSPECT SOMETHING!**

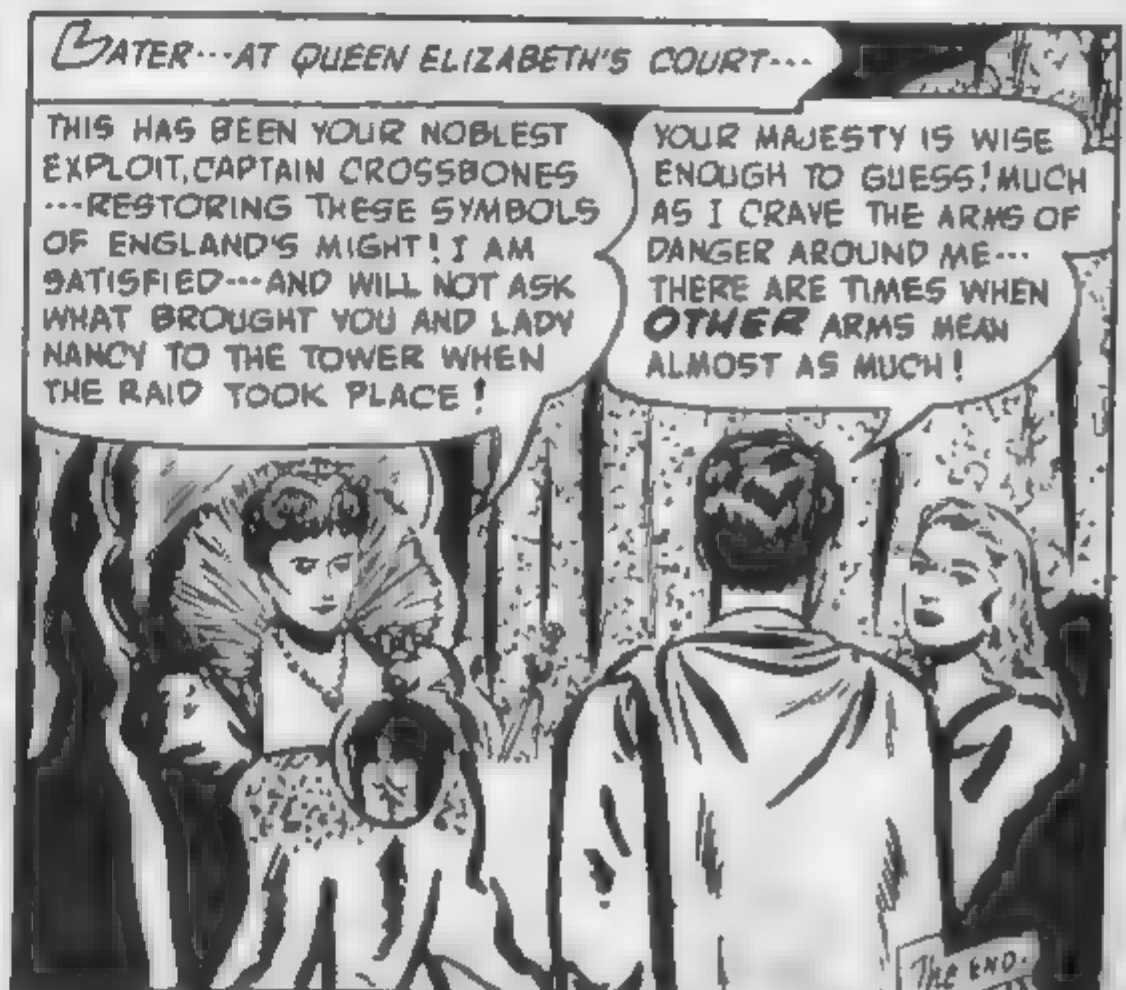
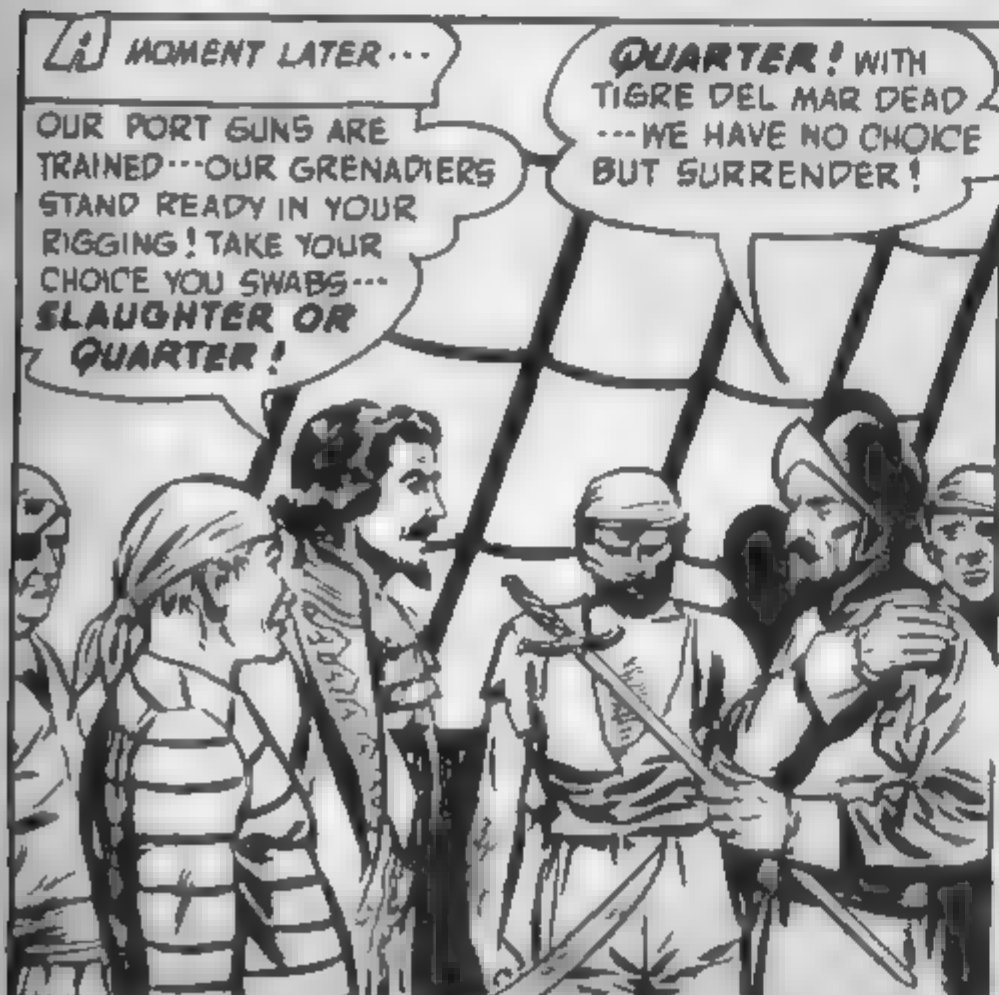
THAT IS YOUR DEATH WARRANT, CROSSBONES! WE ARE READY TO DIVE CLEAR AND SWIM TO OUR SHIP... LEAVING YOU WITH TWO OUNCES OF LEAD IN YOUR LIVER!



UNEXPECTEDLY...

HEAVE TO, DONS!

LOOK ALIVE AT THE HELM! **STARBOARD GUNNERS... TAKE YOUR STATIONS!**





# DEATH IS A STAR SAPPHIRE

**PRISON,**  
STRANGELY ENOUGH,  
OPENED FABULOUS  
NEW VISTAS FOR  
**PAUL RENO,**  
A THREE-TIME  
LOSER!

FOR IT WAS  
BEHIND BARS  
THAT HE FIRST  
LEARNED OF THE  
SACRED STONE  
OF SERAPIS...  
AND THE ANCIENT  
LEGEND WHICH  
WARNED THAT  
TO ALL WHO  
TOUCHED THE  
GEM...  
**DEATH IS A  
STAR  
SAPPHIRE!**



ONLY A VERY SPECIAL BOOK COULD HAVE LURED  
PAUL RENO BACK AGAIN AND AGAIN TO THE PRISON  
LIBRARY --

THIS WHOLE THING SOUNDS  
FANTASTIC! NO WONDER IT'S  
WORTH A KING'S RANSOM!  
ACCORDING TO WHAT  
IT SAYS HERE...

"THE MODERN HISTORY OF THIS FATAL JEWEL  
BEGINS WITH ITS RECENT DISCOVERY BY AN  
ARCHEOLOGICAL EXPEDITION IN SUMARIA..."

WE'VE FOUND IT,  
DOCTOR FOSTER --  
THE TOMB OF  
THE HIGH PRIEST  
OF SERAPIS!

YES, MARAK, AND THIS MUST  
BE THE ACCURSED STONE  
WE'VE READ SO MUCH  
ABOUT! TAKE IT OUTSIDE  
WHILE I CONTINUE  
THE SEARCH!



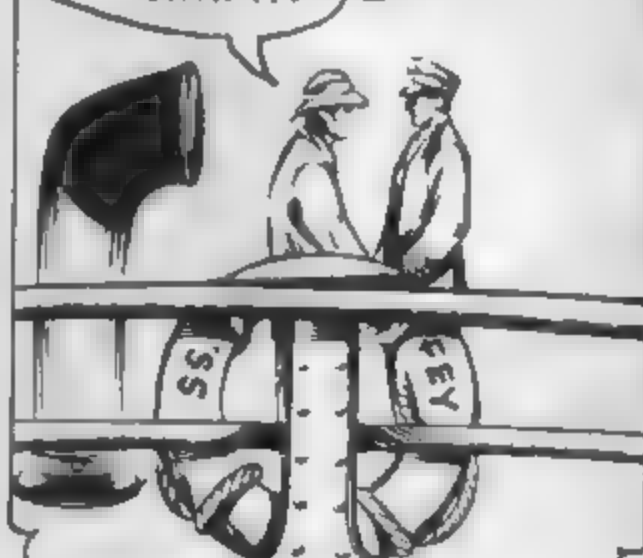
"BUT NO SOONER HAD MARAK LEFT THE TOMB THAN --"

GOOD LORD--- THAT ROCK SLIDE... IT'S SEALING THE TOMB SHUT! DR. FOSTER IS A GONER! THAT CURSE -- IT SEEMS TO BE WORKING ALREADY!



"TERROR-STRUCK, MARAK BROKE CAMP IMMEDIATELY AND HEADED FOR THE NEAREST PORT! THERE..."

ACCORDING TO THE ANCIENT LEGEND, PURSER, DEATH WILL COME TO ANYONE WHO TOUCHES THIS GEM! BUT TO MEN OF SCIENCE, THAT'S NONSENSE! NEVERTHELESS, TAKE SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS WITH IT!



"WITH A SIGN OF RELIEF, MARAK SURRENDERED THE STONE! IN THE HOURS THAT FOLLOWED, LIFE WAS PEACEFUL ABOARD SHIP! THEN... DISASTER!"



HEY, YOU, LOOK OUT... THE CABLE SNAPPED!

"MARAK WAS CRUSHED BEYOND RECOGNITION! WHEN THE SHIP DOCKED IN NEW YORK, THE CURATOR OF THE MUSEUM OF ANTIQUITIES HURRIED TO THE PURSER'S CABIN..."

IT... IT'S MAGNIFICENT... EVERYTHING YOU CLAIMED IN YOUR CABLE! IT WILL MAKE THE FINEST EXHIBIT IN...

TH-THE ROOM... IT'S SPINNING! OH-HH!



I CALLED YOU AS SOON AS I SAW HIM KEEL OVER, DOCTOR! WHAT IS IT?

H-HE'S DEAD! BUT WHY? HE WAS PERFECTLY SOUND ONLY THIS MORNING!



"SEVERAL DAYS LATER, AT THE MUSEUM OF ANTIQUITIES --"

YOU SURE HAD US FINISH THIS DISPLAY IN RECORD TIME, MR. FENTON!

WELL, YOU KNOW HOW THE PUBLIC GOBBLES UP THAT MALARKEY ABOUT THE DEATH LEGEND! I WANT THEM TO SEE THE SAPPHIRE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND REALIZE HOW HARMLESS IT IS!



"SUDDENLY--"

GOOD LORD... IT TOPPLED OVER HIM!

AARGH!





"TODAY, THE SACRED STONE OF SERAPIS STILL LIES IN A DISPLAY CASE AT THE MUSEUM OF ANTIQUITIES, WAITING, MANY PEOPLE CLAIM, FOR NEW VICTIMS!"

CURSED, EH? BAH! IT'S NOTHING BUT A CHAIN OF COINCIDENCES! BESIDES, A PIECE OF ICE LIKE THAT IS WORTH A LITTLE RISK!



HEY, BOOKWORM... THE WARDEN WANTS TO SEE YOU, IF YOU CAN TEAR YOURSELF AWAY!

THE PAROLE BOARD MET THIS AFTERNOON! THIS MAY BE WHAT I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!



PAUL RENO'S FERVENT WISH... PAROLE... WAS SOON GRANTED! THEN, AS A FREE MAN, HE WAS READY TO PUT INTO MOTION HIS GREED-SPAWNED PLAN TO STEAL THE PRICELESS GEM!

SEVERAL DAYS LATER...

THEY SAY THAT THE FOUR PEOPLE WHO TOUCHED IT ARE DEAD!

IT DOES LOOK SORT OF... WELL, EVIL!

LISTEN TO THE JERKS! ALL I'M INTERESTED IN IS THAT EVERY TIME SOMEONE TOUCHED IT AND DIED, ITS VALUE JUMPED!



THIS SHOULD BE CHILD'S PLAY! AS SOON AS THE JOINT'S LOCKED, I'LL SLIP OUT OF HERE AND GRAB THE STONE!



UNCOMFORTABLE HOURS PASSED FOR PAUL RENO -- THEN, CAUTIOUSLY EMERGING FROM HIS GROTESQUE HIDING PLACE...

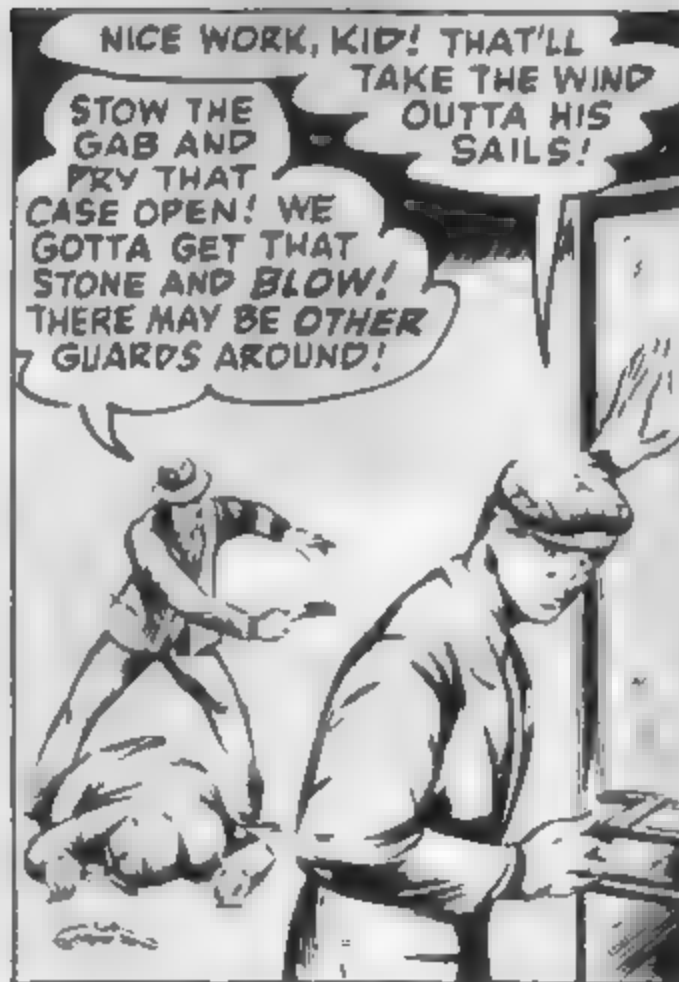
I'LL HAVE THAT DISPLAY CASE JIMMIED OPEN IN NOTHING FLAT! THEN I'LL BREEZE OUT OF HERE WITH A MILLION DOLLARS IN SAPPHIRE! I'LL... WHAT'S THAT NOISE?



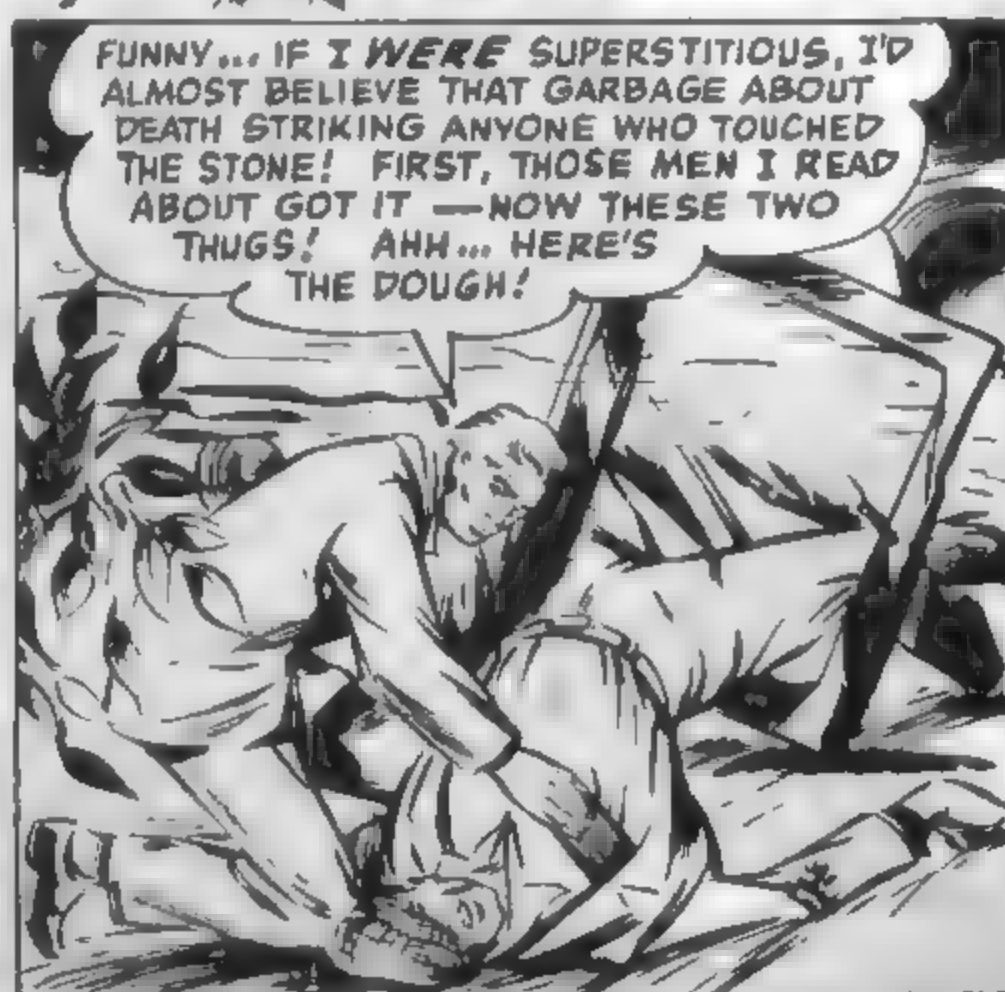
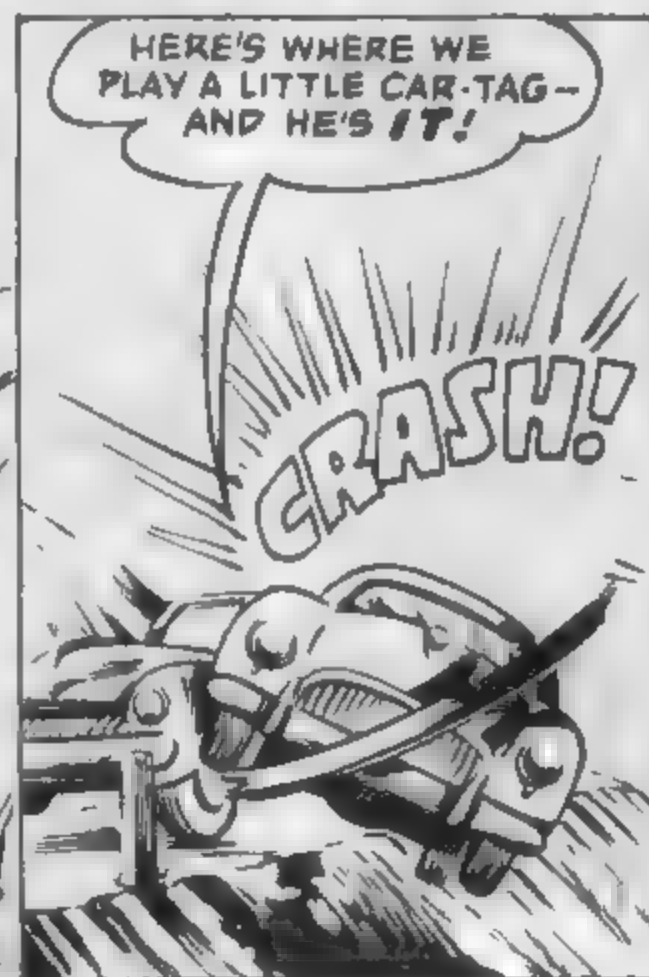
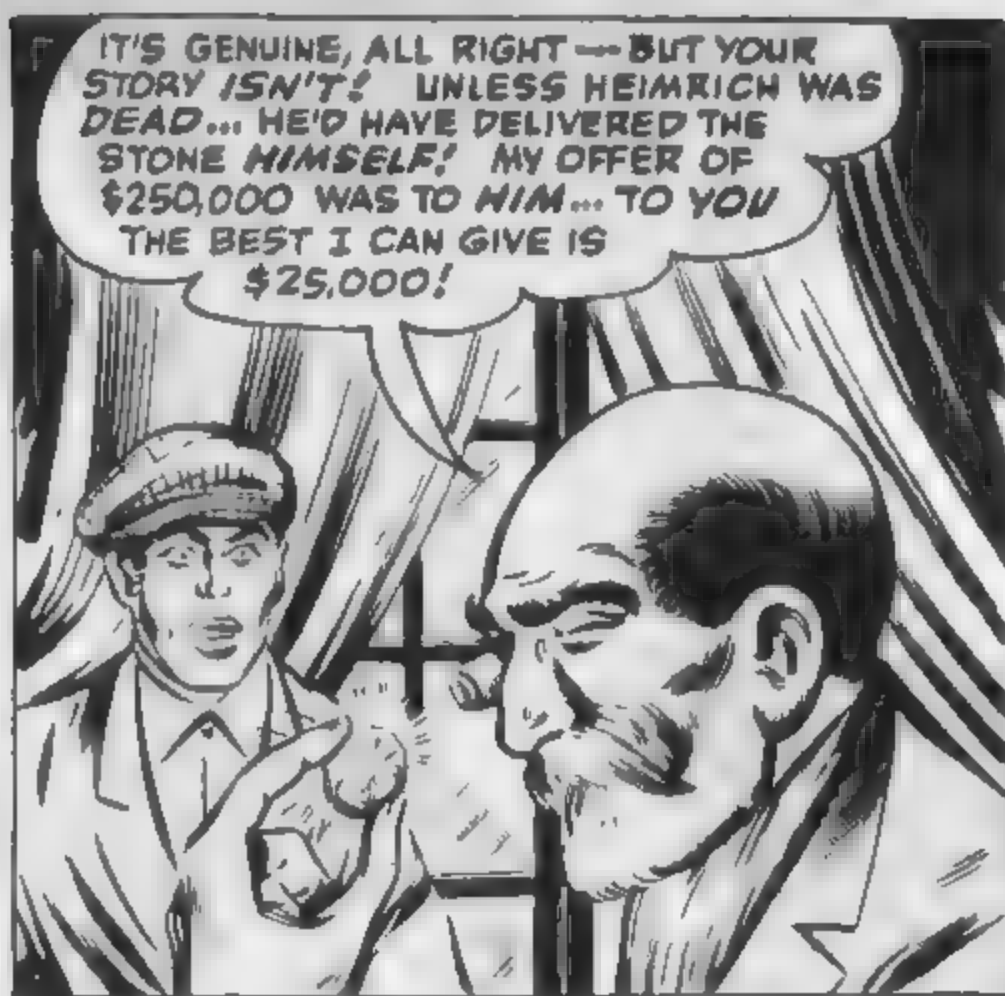
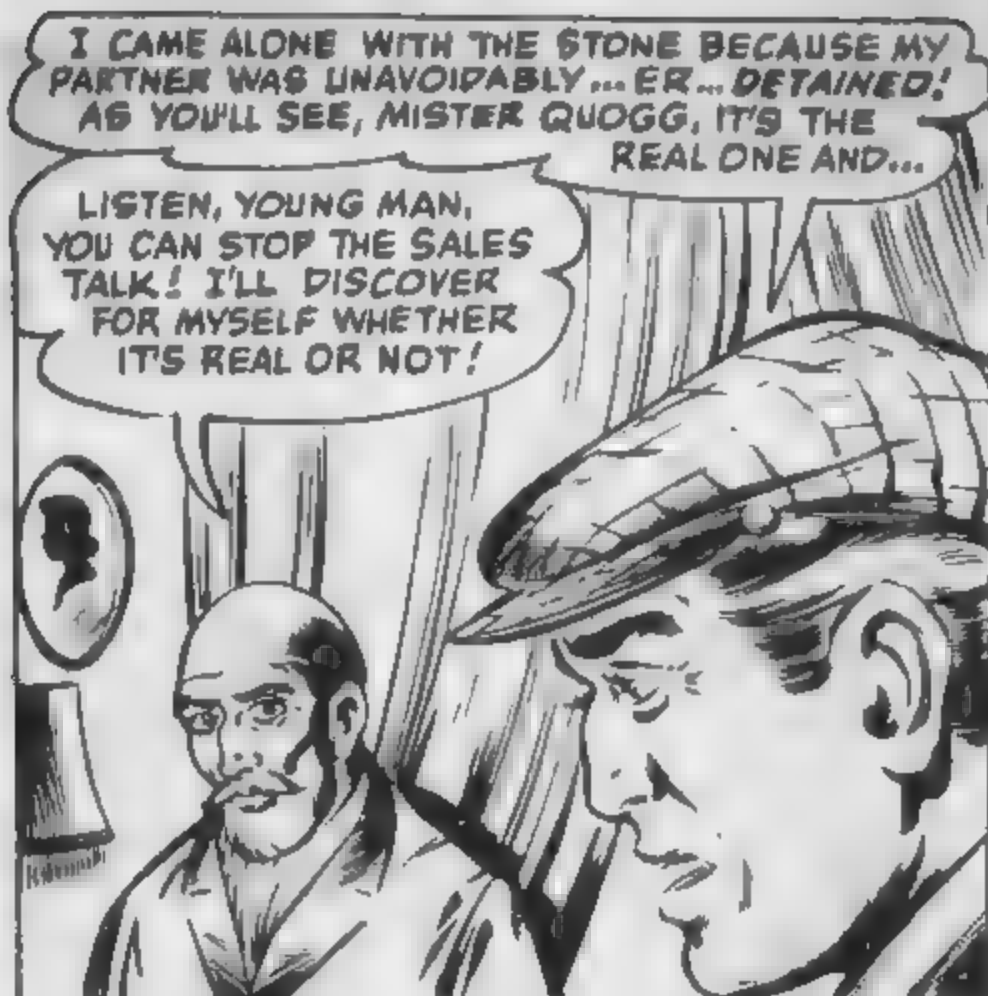
HALT! WHO'S THERE?

A GUARD... HE'S SPOTTED ME! BLAST IT, I'LL HAVE TO SHOOT MY WAY OUT! ONE MORE RAP FOR ATTEMPTED ROBBERY AND I'D GO UP FOR LIFE!





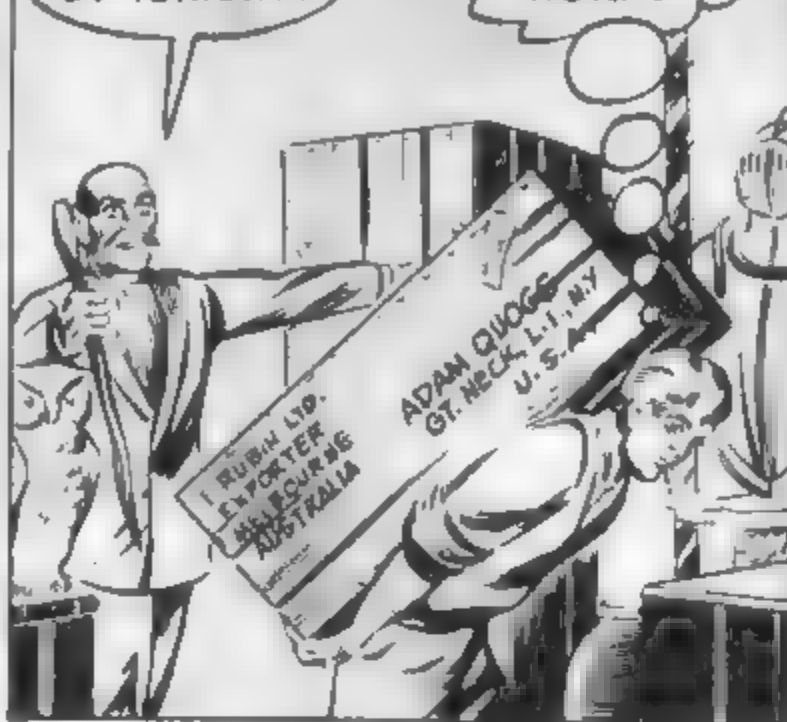




\$25,000 WAS NOT ENOUGH FOR PAUL REND— FOR HE HAD RESOLVED TO POSSESS THE SAPPHIRE ITSELF! BUT NOW HE HAD TO CONTINUE HIS CAMPAIGN CAUTIOUSLY! IN THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, HE FORGED REFERENCES, AND APPLIED FOR A JOB AT THE HOME OF ADAM QUOGG! SOME TIME LATER...

SPEED IT UP, BOY! I DIDN'T HIRE YOU TO REST ON MY TIME! I WANT THIS ROOM REARRANGED BY TONIGHT!

THE OLD BUZZARD'S A REAL SIMON LEGREE! BUT I CAN'T BACK OUT NOW BECAUSE OF A LITTLE WORK!



AND WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED HERE, THERE'S THAT SPECIAL CRATE I RECEIVED THIS MORNING! HANDLE IT WITH EXTREME CARE!

BLAST IT, I'LL HAVE TO FOLLOW ORDERS BECAUSE I STILL HAVEN'T DISCOVERED WHERE HE'S HIDING THE SAPPHIRE! BUT WHEN I DO... HE'S GONNA PAY FOR THIS!



LATER --

HMM... WONDER WHAT THIS CAN BE? COMES ALL THE WAY FROM AFRICA!



THAT CRAZY FOOL SPENDS MILLIONS ON JUNK... WHILE I HAVE TO SWEAT JUST MAKING A FISTFUL OF G NOTES! I DON'T DIG THIS AT ALL...

IT LOOKS LIKE A PLANT OF SOME SORT!



WONDER WHY IT'S SO HEAVILY WRAPPED? I'LL TAKE A MINUTE OFF AND SEE WHAT THE OLD DEVIL BOUGHT!



SUDDENLY --

MEDDLER... GET AWAY FROM THERE! ARE YOU ANXIOUS TO COMMIT SUICIDE?

W-WHAT...?



SUICIDE? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT --? IT'S ONLY A PLANT!

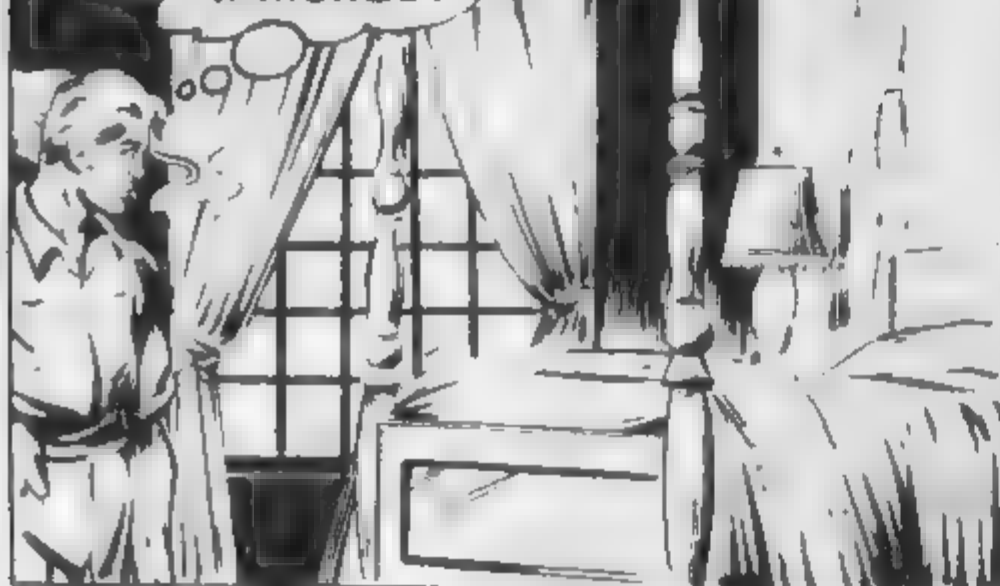
ONLY A PLANT, EH? THIS IS THE MOST DEADLY PLANT IN EXISTENCE -- AND EXTREMELY RARE! GET IT TO MY ROOM AT ONCE, THEN GO ABOUT YOUR WORK!





BURNING WITH CURIOSITY, RENO WAITED UNTIL HIS EMPLOYER HAD LEFT THE MANSION! THEN, STEALTHILY, HE CREEPT TO ADAM QUOGG'S BEDROOM...

HOLY SMOKES! I LEFT THAT PLANT RIGHT HERE ... AND NOW IT'S GONE! EVERY TIME THE OLD MAN GETS SOMETHING HE CALLS PRICELESS, IT'S DELIVERED HERE ... THEN VANISHES!



THERE MUST BE A SECRET CHAMBER CONNECTED TO THIS ROOM! WHEREVER THE PLANT'S HIDDEN ... THAT'S WHERE THE STONE WILL BE! I CAN'T INVESTIGATE NOW BECAUSE QUOGG MAY BE BACK ANY MINUTE! BUT LATER TONIGHT...



IN THE SILENT HOURS OF EARLY MORNING AFTER QUOGG HAD RETIRED...

THOSE SLEEPING PILLS HE TAKES SHOULD KEEP HIM IN SLUMBERLAND WHILE I WORK!



STILL NO SIGN OF ANY SECRET PANELS! I'VE GONE OVER THE WALL WITH A FINE-TOOTH COMB AND... WAIT! THIS PICTURE... MOVING IT TO ONE SIDE IS CAUSING THE WALL TO SLIDE OPEN!



GREAT SCOTT-- I'VE HIT THE JACKPOT THIS TIME! THERE'S LOOT ALL OVER THE JOINT-- AND-- THERE'S THE RARE PLANT!



WOW... MAYBE THAT OLD GOAT WASN'T KIDDING! THAT THING REACHED OUT AS THOUGH IT WERE TRYING TO GRAB ME! I'D BETTER KEEP AWAY FROM IT AND GO TO WORK ON THAT WALL SAFE!



WORKING WITH SWIFT PRECISION, RENO SOON HAD THE SAFE OPEN! THEN, GLITTERING IN THE MURKY GLOOM--

IT'S MINE AT LAST... THE SACRED STONE OF SERAPIS! AND THE SAFE'S CRAMMED FULL OF DIAMONDS, RUBIES, AND EMERALDS! I'LL BE A MILLIONAIRE!



GLOATING TRIUMPHANTLY, RENO FAILED TO HEAR THE SOUND OF STEPS BEHIND HIM!

THIEF... DROP THOSE THINGS AND GET OUT! GO OR I'LL CALL THE POLICE!

DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH, BALDY! I'VE WAITED A LONG TIME FOR THIS... AND NO ONE'S GOING TO STAND IN MY WAY!



I WON'T LET YOU STEAL MY STONE! UGH!

I'M GOING TO HAVE THAT SAPPHIRE... EVEN IF I HAVE TO KILL YOU!



YOUR HIDING PLACE WAS CLEVER, QUOGG... SO CLEVER THAT NO ONE'LL EVER FIND YOUR BODY UNTIL AFTER I'VE MADE MY GETAWAY! HA... EVEN THEN THEY'LL PROBABLY ATTRIBUTE YOUR DEATH TO THE CURSE OF THE SAPPHIRE!



THERE'LL BE NO MORE TROUBLE FROM HIM! COME TO POPPA, SACRED STONE... YOU AND I ARE GOING BYE-BYE!



WITHOUT WARNING, CLUTCHING LIKE THE COILS OF A THOUSAND ANGRY SNAKES --

WHAT TH'...? YE GODS!... TH-THAT CRAZY PLANT... IT... IT'S WRAPPING ITSELF AROUND ME!



PAUL RENO FOUGHT SAVAGELY TO FREE HIMSELF FROM THE DEATH-GRIP OF THE WEIRD, RELENTLESS PLANT... BUT TO NO AVAIL! SLOWLY... SLOWLY... IT DREW HIM CLOSER TOWARD ITS GAPING MOUTH... CLOSER...

NO... NO! YIIIIIIII!



IN A MATTER OF MOMENTS, THE MALEVOLENT MONSTER HAD DEVoured PAUL RENO... WITHOUT A TRACE! THEN, ALL WAS QUIET IN THE LITTLE CHAMBER... LIKE THE SILENCE OF THE TOMB!



AND AT THE FOOT OF THE PLANT ... AS THOUGH BECKONING TO ITS NEXT VICTIM... GLOWED THE INCREDIBLE SACRED STONE OF SERAPIS!

The END



THIS IS THE KIND OF GRIPPING STORY YOU'LL REMEMBER LONG AFTER IT'S READ...FOR ITS CHILLING SUSPENSE, CREEPING TERROR, AND A SURPRISE ENDING THAT MAKES YOU ASK, COULD IT BE TRUE? COULD I BE CAUGHT IN THE AWESOMELY EVIL WEB OF...

# The DEMON MASTER!



WHAT IS FURTHER REMOVED FROM TERROR THAN NEWLYWEDS SHOPPING FOR FURNITURE?

LET'S LOOK INSIDE, BOB...ANTIQUE FURNITURE LENDS CHARACTER TO A HOME!

YOU'RE THE BOSS, SWEET-HEART!

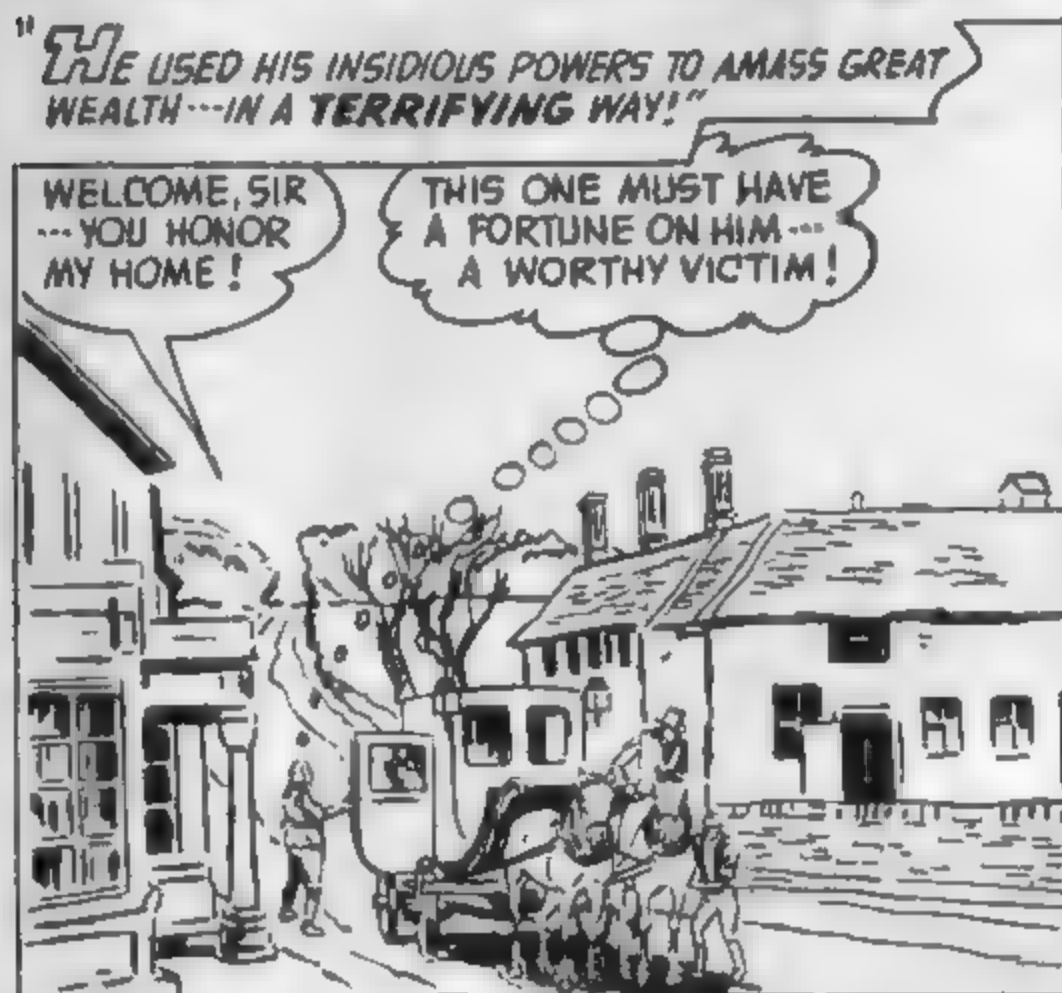
BOB...I'VE JUST GOT TO HAVE THAT QUAIN T LAMP!

I'LL PRICE IT!

I BEG YOUR PARDON...

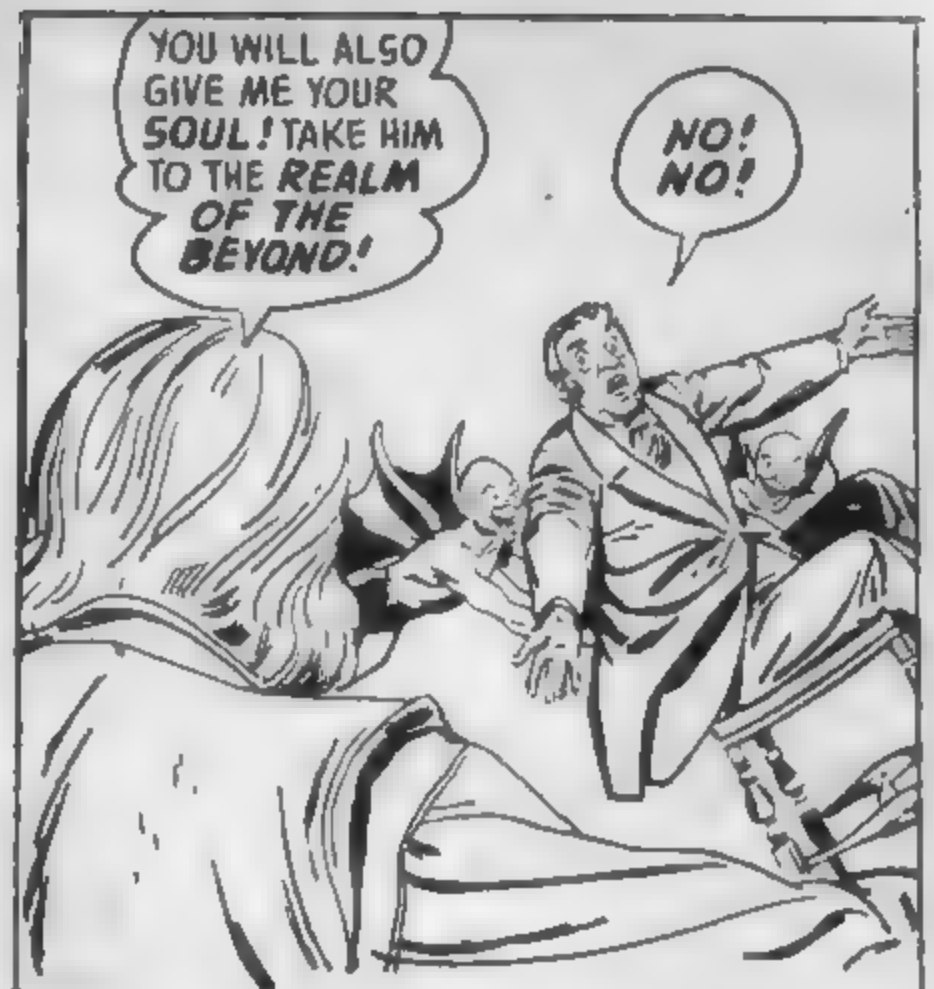
I KNEW IT... THEY COULDN'T RESIST THAT LAMP!





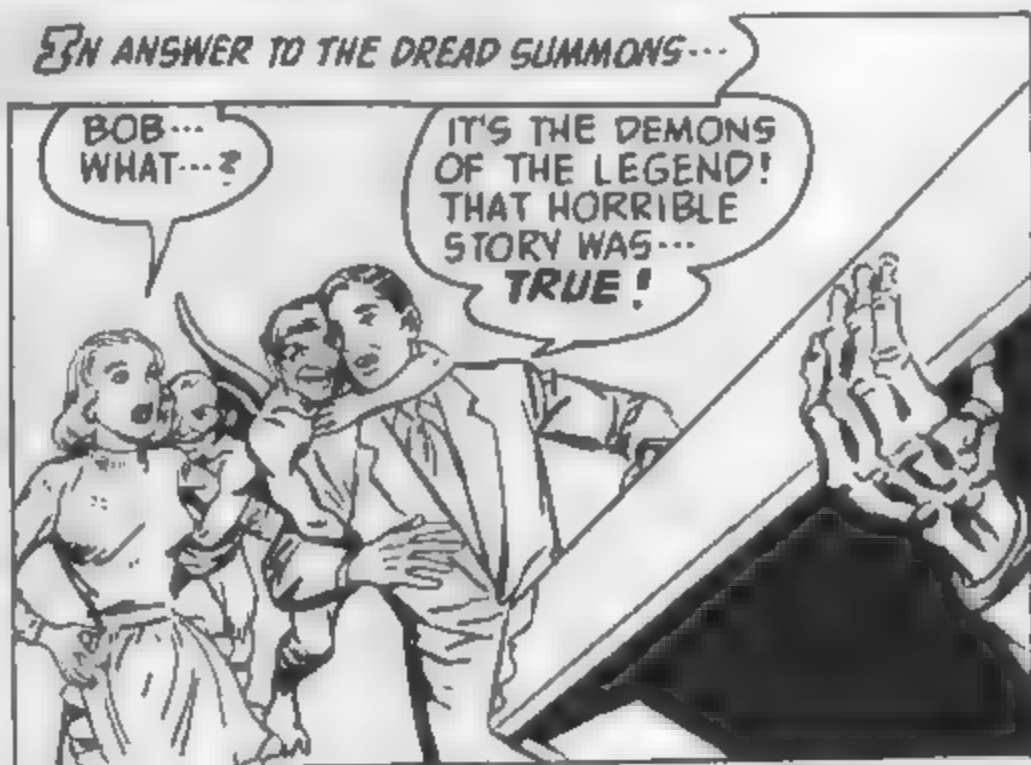
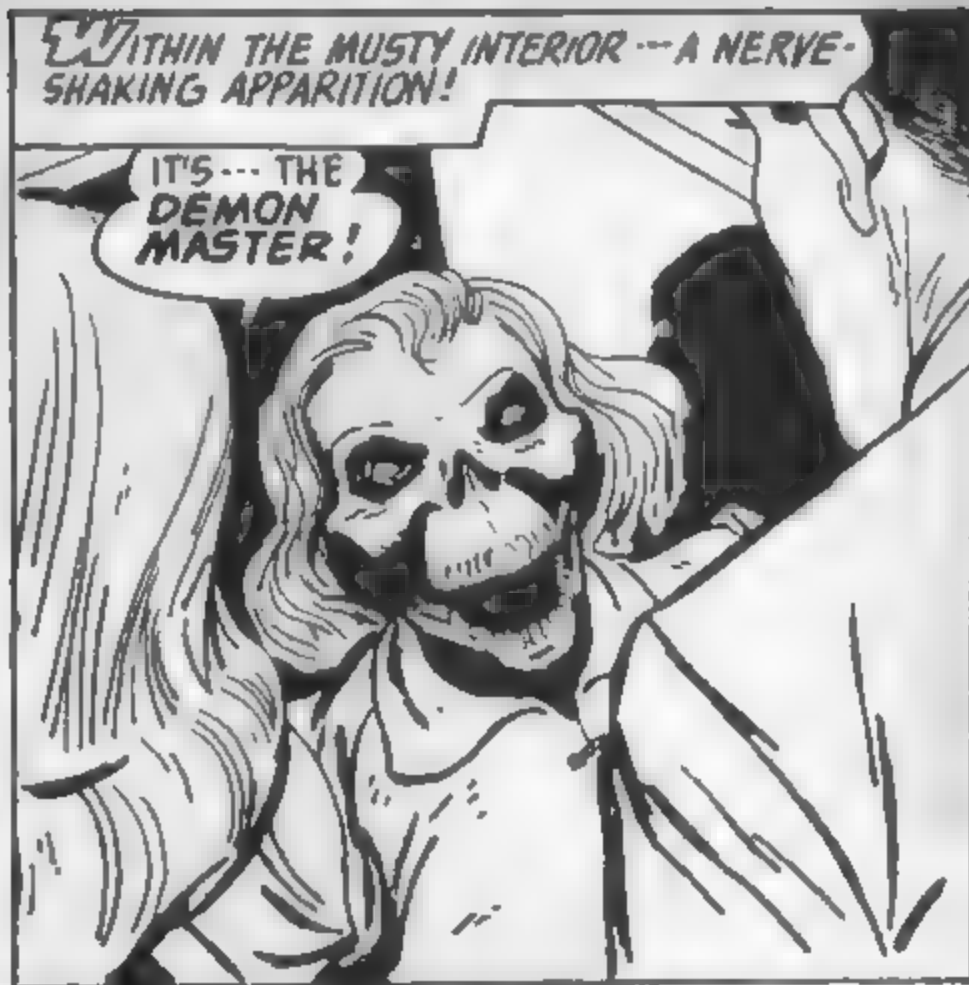


"THEN, THE DEMON MASTER CALLED UPON THE VILE FORCES AT HIS COMMAND--"



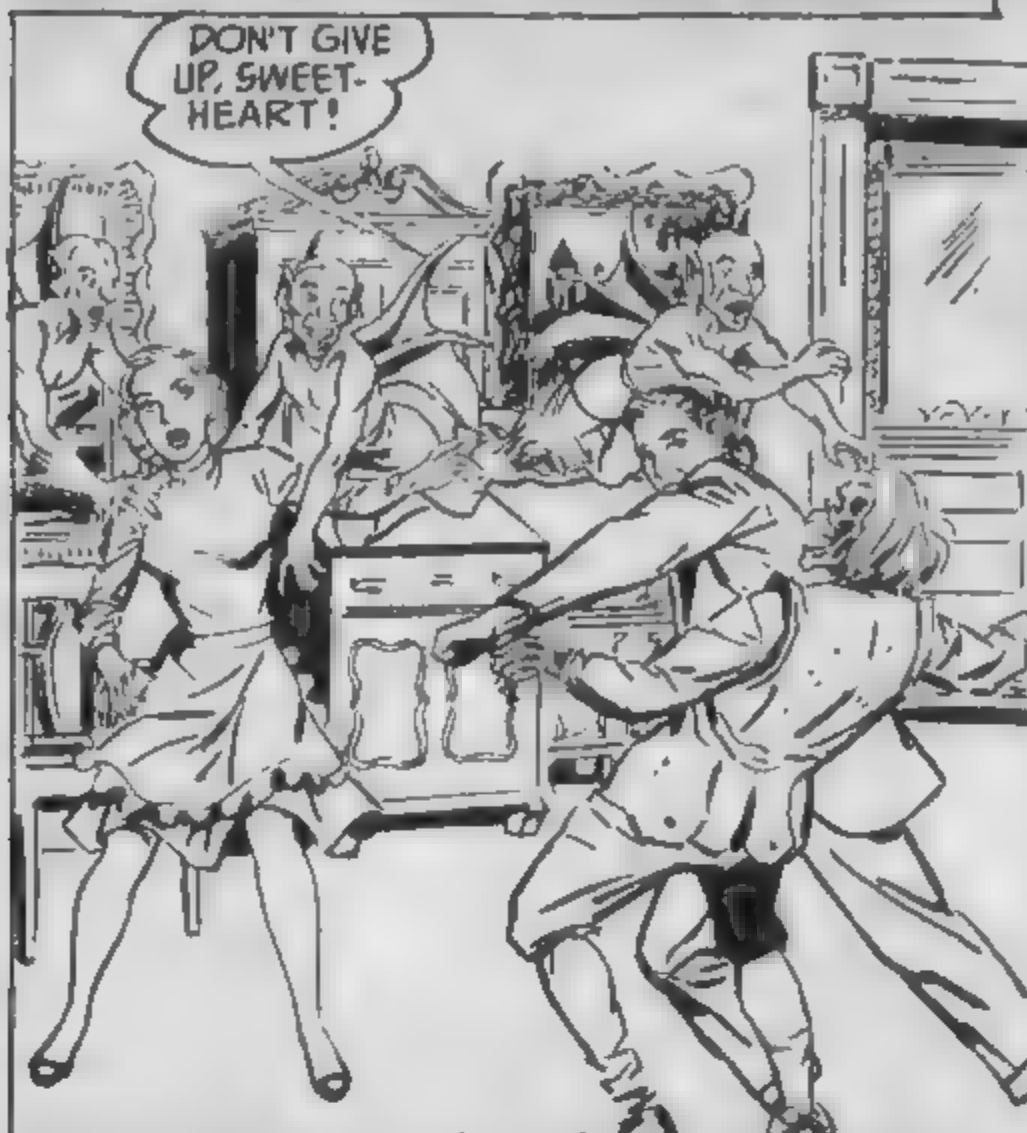
"AS THE FIEND TURNED, HIS HIDEOUS GUISE VANISHED--"







**BUT WITH THE STRENGTH OF LOVE AND DESPERATION...**



**NOW...THERE WAS BUT ONE FINAL HOPE...**





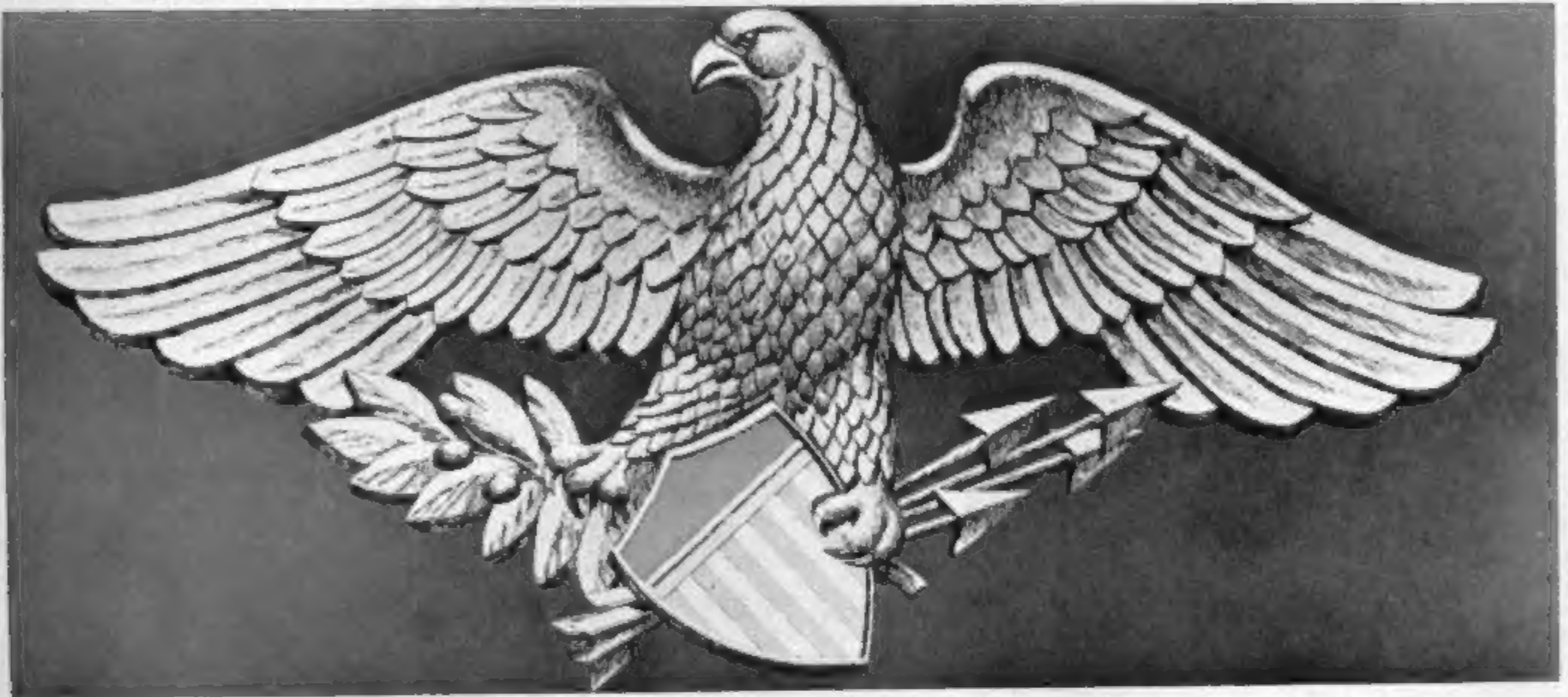






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New York, N.Y. 10016

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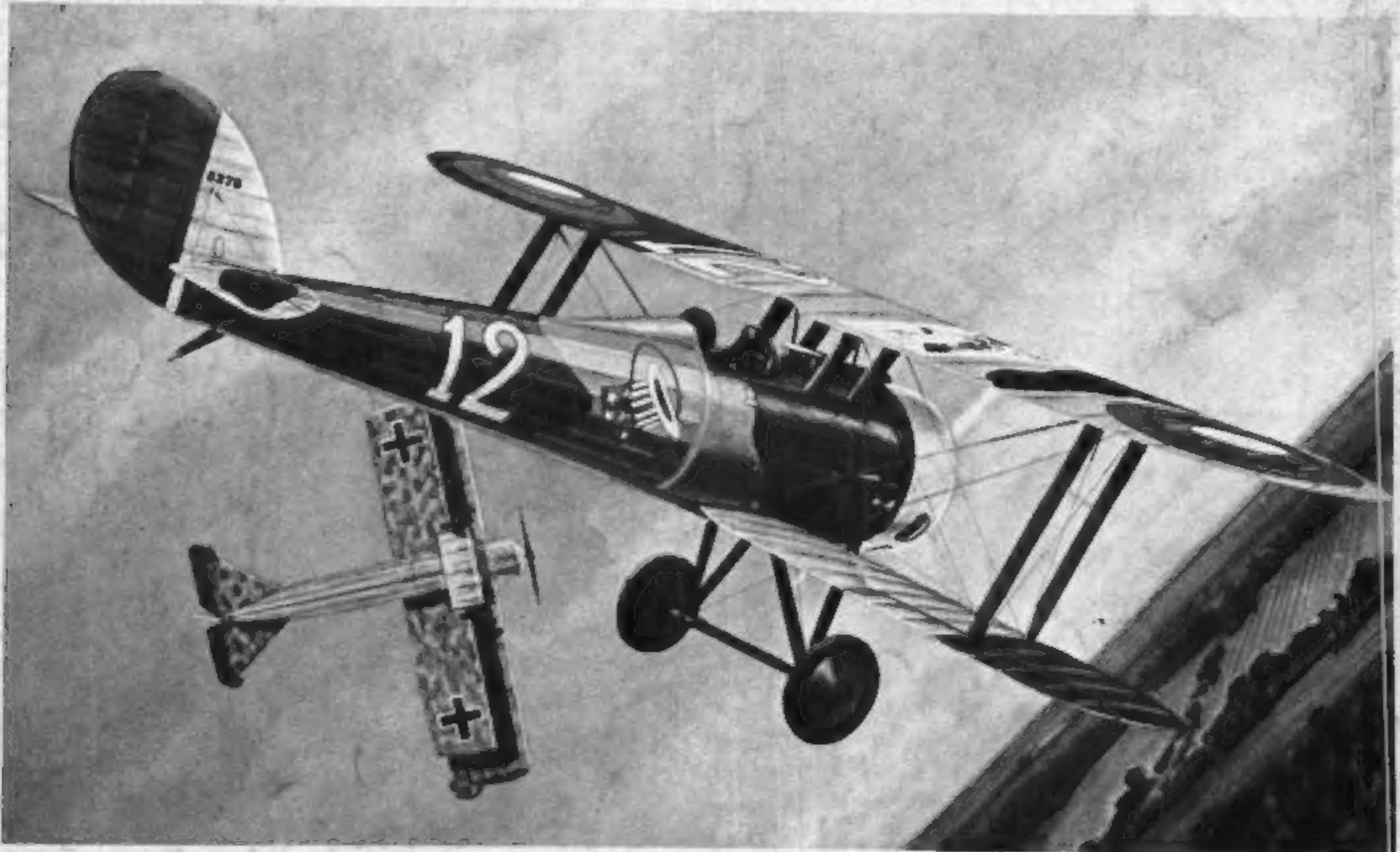
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